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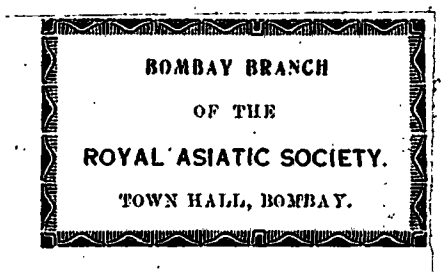

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Fac Simile of Mr. Pope's hand writing.

To face Vol. 2

Thus having spoke, ye Illustrous Chief of Troy
~~Extends his eager arms to embrace his Boy~~
Stretch'd his fond arms to seize ye ~~beauteous~~ Lovely Boy
The ~~Boy~~ Babe clung orging to his Nurses bwast
Scard at ye darling Helm & nodding Crest
Wn silent pleasure each fond ~~[illegible]~~ Parent smild
& Hector hastend to relieve his Child
~~His radiant Helmet~~ The glitting Terrours from his Brows ~~[illegible]~~ unbound & placed ye ~~radiant~~ beauty Helmet rens & Spoad
~~Long Ground~~ The ~~glitting [illegible] placed~~
~~Then seizt ye Boy, & raising him in air~~ The ~~[illegible]~~ lifting in his arms his infant heir
Thus to ye Gods addrst ye Fathers prayer
O thou whose ~~thunder thakes~~ ye Eternal throne
& all ye ~~other~~ deathless Glory fills
Powrs! protect my Son!
~~Like mine his [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]~~
~~the [illegible] & [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]~~
~~Like mine his [illegible] & his [illegible] [illegible]~~ Grant him like me to purchase pastures
~~Like mine his labors to defend ye Crown~~ to guard the Trojans ~~[illegible]~~ to defend ye Crown
~~In arms like me his Country's Wall [illegible]~~
Agt his Countrys foes ye war to wage & rise ye Hector of ye future age
& rise ye Hector of ye future age
To when triumphant from successful ~~[illegible]~~ toils
Of Heroes slain he bears ye reeking spoils
~~All Troy~~ whole Horts ~~[illegible]~~ hail hith wn deserd acclaim
& ~~[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]~~ Owne ye the Son nansends his Fathers fame
While pleasd amidst ye gental Shouts of Troy
His Mothers Conscious Heart ~~[illegible]~~ of Lorrs wn Joy
Hesd & gaiety ~~[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]~~ on her charms
Restoid his Infant to her loving arms
Lost on her fragrant Breast ye babe the layd Hesd ~~[illegible]~~ to Repose & wn a smile mwyd
~~Brest to her Heart~~ & wn a smile sawyd
Bussow The troubled Pleasure ~~[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] fears~~ Dasd wn Fear The tender Pleasure soon chastied by wn Fear
She mingled wn wtaile a tender Fear

To Mr Alexander Pope
at Mr Scrans house at

Frank
J. Addison

Bath

Sagnate sculpt

CURIOSITIES

OF

LITERATURE.

SIXTH EDITION.

101651

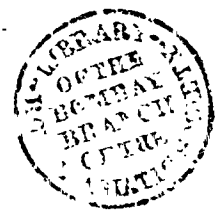
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

MMH 9

Non possum vivere nisi in litteris viverem.

CICERO, Lib. IX. Ep. 178.



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INDEX

To the Contents of the Second Volume.

page

A.

Abridgers 178
Abstraction of Mind, Anecdotes of 417
Academy, French, a Glance into the 205
Ariosto and Tasso 158
Astrea, an old French Romance 276
Authors censured, Anecdotes of 197

B.

Bayle 167
Bentley's Milton 131
Bible Prohibited and Improved 348
Books, little 91
Buckingham, Duke of 319
Bullen, Anne 297

C.

Catholic's Refutation 94
Cervantes 172
Charles I. 313
Charles IX. of France, Death of 322
Comedy of a Madman 397
Corneille, Peter 232
Critics 194

page

D.

Deaths, Poetical and Grammatical.....213
Dedications.....73
Drama, early Anecdotes of the.....381
Dramatic Dialogue, a Contrivance in.....394

E.

Elizabeth, Queen, an original Letter of.....294
European Manners, Anecdotes of.....364

F.

Fac Simile in this work, explained.....511
Fire Works, origin of.....342

G.

German and Dutch Literary.....188

I.

Imitations, and Similarities, Poetical.....481
James I.....299
Jansenist Dictionary.....137
Jews of York, an historical anecdote.....450
Jonson, Ben.....151

K.

Kissing Hands, historical notices of this Custom.....460

L.

Literary Blunders.....44
——— Composition.....467
——— Controversies.....23
——— Fashions.....515
——— Follies.....1
——— Friendships.....409
——— Productions, not seizable by Creditors.....192
——— Sinner, Advice of a.....96
——— Wife.....55
Love and Folly, an ancient Morality.....115

page

M.

Magliabechi 173
Manuscripts and Books 140
"Marriage of the Arts," a scarce and whimsical Comedy 389
Monk, General, and his Wife 308
Mysteries, Moralities, Farces, and Sotties 100

N.

Names, influence of 431
Nobility 332

P.

Pamphlets 83
Philip and Mary 310
Philosophical Poems 78
Plagiarism, and Obscurity, Professors of 183
Poets 241
—— Laureat 283
Politian, Angelo 288
Popes 464
Promotions, Royal 329

R.

Religious Nouvellettes 119
Richardson 423
Romances 260

S.

Salutations of various Nations 333
Scarron 219
Seas, Sovereignty of the 457
Solitude, Anecdotes of 401
Spenser, Jonson, and Shakspeare 148
Spy, Turkish 144

T.

Theological Style 429

page

V.

Virginity, a Treatise on, by St. Ambrose 203

W.

War, singularities of..... 339
Writing, origin of the Materials of..... 353

CURIOSITIES

OF

Literature.

LITERARY FOLLIES.

THE Greeks composed Lypogrammatic Works; works in which one letter of the alphabet is not employed. A Lypogrammatist is a letter-dropper. In this manner Tryphiodorus wrote his Odyssey; he had not α in his first book; nor β in his second; and so on with the subsequent letters one after another. Addison humorously observes of this Lypogrammatist who excluded the whole four and twenty letters in their turns, and shewed them, one after another, that he could do his business without them. This Odyssey imitated the Lypogrammatic Iliad of Nestor, a poet, who lived in the reign of the emperor Severus. Among other works of this kind Athenæus mentions an ode by Pindar, in which he had purposely omitted the letter S; so that this inept ingenuity appears to have been one of those literary fashions which are sometimes encouraged even by those

who should first oppose such progresses into the realms of nonsense.

There is in Latin a little prose work of Fulgentius, which the author divides into twenty-three chapters, according to the order of the twenty-three letters of the Latin alphabet. From A to O are still remaining. The first chapter is without A; the second without B; the third without C; and so with the rest. Du Chat, in the Ducatiana, says, there are five novels in prose of Lopes de Vega; the first without A, the second without E, the third without I, &c. Who will attempt to examine them?

The Orientalists are not without this literary folly. A Persian poet read to the celebrated Jami a gazel of his own composition, which Jami did not like: but the writer replied it was notwithstanding a very curious sonnet, for the *letter Aliff* was not to be found in any one of the words! Jami sarcastically replied, "You can do a better thing yet; take away *all the letters* from every word you have written."

To these works may be added the *Ecloga de Calvis*, by Hugbald the Monk. All the words of this silly work begin with a C. It is printed in Dornavius. *Pugna Porcorum*; all the words beginning with a P, in the Nugæ Venales. *Canum cum cattis certamen*; the words begin-

ning with a C: a performance of the same kind in the same work. Gregorio Leti presented a discourse to the Academy of the humourists at Rome, throughout which he had purposely omitted the letter R, and he entitled it the exiled R. A friend having requested a copy as a literary curiosity, for such he considered this idle performance, Leti, to shew it was not so difficult a matter, replied by a copious answer of seven pages, in which he had observed the same severe ostracism against the letter R! Lord North, one of the finest gentlemen in the court of James I. has written a set of Sonnets, each of which begins with a successive letter of the alphabet. The Earl of Rivers in the reign of Edward IV. translated the Moral Proverbs of Christiana of Pisa, a poem of about two hundred lines, the greatest part of which he contrived to conclude with the letter E; an instance of his Lordship's hard application, and the bad taste of an age which, Lord Orford observes, had witticisms and whims to struggle with, as well as ignorance.

It has been well observed of these minute triflers that extreme exactness is the sublime of fools, whose labours may be well called, in the language of Dryden,

"Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry."

And Martial says,

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.

'Tis a folly to sweat o'er a difficult trifle,
And for silly devices invention to rifle.

I shall not dwell on the wits who composed verses in the forms of hearts, wings, altars, and true-love knots*; nor those, not less absurd, who expose to public ridicule the name of their mistress by employing it to form their acrostics. I have seen some of the latter, where *both sides* and *cross-ways*, the name of the mistress or the patron has been sent down to posterity with eternal torture. The great difficulty where *one name* is made out *four times* in the same acrostic, must have been to have found words by which the letters forming the name should be forced to stand in their particular places. Puttenham, in that very scarce book "The Art of Poesie," p. 75, gives several odd specimens of poems in the forms of lozenges, rhomboids, pillars, &c. Some of them from Oriental poems communicated by a traveller. Puttenham is a very lively writer, and has contrived to form a defence for describing and making such

* Ben Jonson describes these "curious forms" in a line in his "Execration on Vulcan,"

"A pair of scissars and a comb in verse."

trifling devices. He has done more: he has erected two pillars himself to the honour of Queen Elizabeth; every pillar consists of a base of eight syllables, the shaft or middle of four, and the capital is equal with the base. The only difference between the two pillars, consists in this; in the one "ye must read upwards," and in the other the reverse. These pillars, notwithstanding this fortunate device and variation, are of equal duration, and may be fixed as two columns in the porch of the vast temple of literary folly.

It was at this period when either *words* or *verse* were tortured into such fantastic forms, that the trees in gardens were twisted or mangled into giants, or peacocks, or flower-pots, and obelisks, &c. In a copy of verses "To a hair of my mistress's eye-lash," the merit next to the choice of the subject, must have been the arrangement or the disarrangement of the whole poem into the form of a heart. With a pair of wings many a sonnet fluttered, and a sacred hymn was expressed by the mystical triangle. *Acrostics* are formed from the initial letters of every verse; but a different conceit regulated *chronograms*, which were used to describe *dates*—the *numeral letters* in whatever part of the word they stood were distinguished from other letters by being written in *capitals*. Mr.

Harris gives an example. To mark by a *chronogram* the date 1506 he finds the following from Horace:

— feriam sidera vertice.

And by a strange elevation of CAPITALS the *Chronogrammatist* compels even Horace to give the year of our Lord thus,

— feriaM siDera VertIce. MDVI.

The ACROSTIC and the CHRONOGRAM are both ingeniously described in the mock Epic of the Scribleriad. The *initial letters* of the acrostics are thus alluded to in the literary wars,

Firm and compact, in three fair columns wore
O'er the smooth plain, the bold *acrostics* move,
High o'er the rest, the *towering leaders* rise
With *limbs gigantic*, and *superior size*.

But the looser character of the *chronogram*, and the disorder in which they are found, are ingeniously sung thus,

Not thus the *looser chronograms* prepare,
Careless their troops, undisciplined to war;
With *rank irregular*, *confused* they stand,
The *chieftains mingling* with the vulgar band.

He afterwards adds others of the illegitimate races of wit:

To join these squadrons, o'er the champain came
A numerous race of no ignoble name;
Riddle, and *rebus*, riddle's dearest son,
And *false conundrum* and *insidious pun*.
Fustian, who scarcely deigns to tread the ground,
And *rondeau*, wheeling in repeated round.
On their fair standards by the wind display'd,
Eggs, *altars*, *wings*, *pipes*, *axes* were pourtray'd.

The *Charade* of recent birth had not yet made its grotesque appearance.

Anagrams were another whimsical invention; with the *letters* of any *name* they contrived to make out some entire word, descriptive of the character of the person who bore the name. These anagrams, therefore, were either injurious or complimentary. Scioppius imagined himself fortunate that his adversary *Scaliger* was perfectly *Sacrilege* in all the oblique cases of the Latin language. On this principle Sir John *Wiat* was made out, to his own satisfaction, —*a wit*. They were not always correct when a great compliment was required; the poet *John Cleveland* was strained at to make *Helicon-ian dew*.

Verses of grotesque forms have sometimes been contrived to convey ingenious thoughts. M. Pannard has tortured his agreeable vein of poetry into such forms. He has made some of his bacchanalian songs take the figures of *bot-*

tles, and others of *glasses*. These objects are perfectly drawn by the various measures of the verses which form the songs. He has also introduced an *echo* in his verses which he contrives shall not injure their sense. This was practised by the old French bards in the age of Marot, and this poetical whim is ridiculed by Butler in his Hudibras, Part I. Canto 3. Verse 190. I give an example of these poetical echos. The following ones are ingenious, lively, and satirical.

Pour nous plaire, un plu*met*
Met
Tout en usage;
Mais on trouve sou*vent*
Vent
Dans son langage.
On y voit des Commis
Mis
Comme des Princes,
Après être [illegible]
Nuds
De leurs Provinces.

I must notice the poetical whim of Cretin, a great poet in his day: he died in 1525. He brought into fashion punning or equivocal rhimes, such as these which Marot addressed to him, and which, indulging the same rhiming folly as his own, are superior for a glimpse of sense, though very unworthy of their author:

L'homme sotart, et *non sçavant*
Comme un Rotisseur, *qui lave oye*,
La faute d'autrui, *nonce avant*
Qu'il la cognoisse, ou *qu'il la voye*, &c.

I give one more instance in the following nonsensical lines of Du Bartas, in which this poet imagined that he imitated the harmonious notes of the lark:

La gentille aloüette, avec son tirelire,
Tirelire à lire, et tireliran tire,
Vers la voute du ciel, puis son vol vers ce lieu,
Vire et desire dire adieu Dieu, adieu Dieu.

The French have an ingenious kind of Nonsense Verses called *Amphigouries*. The word is composed of a Greek adverb signifying *about*, and of a substantive signifying *a circle*. The following is a specimen; it is elegant in the selection of words, and what the French called richly rhimed—in fact it is fine poetry, but it has no meaning whatever. Pope's Stanzas, said to be written by a *person of quality*, to ridicule the tuneful nonsense of certain Bards, and which Gilbert Wakefield mistook for a serious composition, and wrote two pages of Commentary to prove this song was disjointed, obscure, and absurd, is an excellent specimen of these *Amphigouries*.

AMPHIGOURIE.

Qu'il est heureux de se defendre
Quand le cœur ne s'est pas rendu!

Mais qu'il est facheux de se rendre
Quand le bonheur est suspendu !
Par un discours sans suite et tendre,
Egarez un cœur eperdu;
Souvent par un mal-entendu
L'amant adroit se fait entendre.

IMITATED.

How happy to defend our heart
When Love has never thrown a dart !
But ah ! unhappy when it bends,
If pleasure her soft bliss suspends !
Sweet in a wild disordered strain,
A lost and wandering heart to gain !
Oft in mistaken language wooed
The skilful lover 's understood.

These verses have such a resemblance to meaning, that Fontenelle having listened to the song imagined he had a glimpse of sense, and requested to have it repeated. "Don't you perceive (said Madame Tencin) that they are *Nonsense Verses*?" The malicious wit, who was never without a retort, replied "They are so much like the fine verses I have heard here, that it is not surprising I should be for once mistaken!"

In the "Scribleriad" we find a good account of *the Cento*. A Cento primarily signifies a cloak made of patches. In poetry it denotes a work wholly composed of verses, or passages promiscuously taken from other authors, only disposed in a new form or order, so as to compose a new

work and a new meaning. Ausonius has laid down the rules to be observed in composing *Centos*. The pieces may be taken either from the same poet, or from several; and the verses may be either taken entire or divided into two; one half to be connected with another half taken elsewhere; but two verses are never to be taken together. Agreeable to these rules he has made a pleasant nuptial *Cento* from Virgil.

The Empress Eudoxia wrote the life of Jesus Christ in centos taken from Homer; Proba Falconia from Virgil. Among these grave trifflers Alexander Ross of Aberdeen published one with this title, "Virgilius Evangelizans, sive historia Domini et Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi Virgilianis verbis et versibus descripta." It was republished in 1769.

A more difficult whim is that of "*Reciprocal Verses*," which give the same words whether read backwards or forwards. The following line is a curious specimen:

"*Signa te, signa temere me tangis et angis.*"

The reader has only to take the pains of reading the line backwards, and he will find himself just where he was after all his fatigue.

Francis Colonna, an Italian Monk, is the author of a whimsical book entitled "The Dream of Poliphilus;" in which he relates his amours with a lady of the name of Polia. It was con-

sidered improper to prefix his name to the work; but being desirous of marking it by some peculiarity, that he might claim it at any distant day, he contrived that the initial letters of every chapter should be formed of those of his name and of the subject he treats. This odd invention was not discovered till many years afterwards: when the wits employed themselves in decyphering it, unfortunately it became a source of literary altercation, being susceptible of various readings. The most correct appears thus: POLIAM FRATER FRANCISCUS COLUMNA PERAMAVIT. "Brother Francis Colonna passionately loved Polia." This gallant Monk, like another Petrarch, made the name of his mistress the subject of his amatorial meditations; and as the first called his Laura, his Laurel, this called his Polia, his Polita, "neat or polished."*

A few years afterwards Marcellus Palingenius Stellatus employed a similar artifice in his ZODIACUS VITÆ, "The Zodiac of Life;" the initial letters of the first twenty-nine verses of the first book of this poem forming his name, which curious particular is not noticed by Warton in his account of this work.—The perform-

* Boccacio, in a poem of fifty cantos, has formed one vast Acrostic, of which Guinguené, in his Literary History of Italy, has given a specimen in the Notes, Vol. II. p. 54.

ance is divided into twelve books, but has no reference to astronomy, which we might naturally expect. He distinguished his twelve books by the twelve names of the celestial signs, and probably extended or confined them purposely to that number, to humour his fancy. Warton however observes, "this strange pedantic title is not totally without a *conceit*, as the author was born at *Stellada* or *Stellata*, a province of Ferrara, and from whence he called himself Marcellus Palingenius Stellatus." The work itself is a curious satire on the Pope and the Church of Rome.

Are we not to class among *literary follies* the strange researches which writers, even of the present day, have made in *Antediluvian* times? Forgeries of the grossest nature have been alluded to, or quoted as authorities. A *book of Enoch* once attracted considerable attention, and this forgery has been quoted; but the Sabeans pretend they possess a work written by *Adam!* and this work has been *recently* appealed to in favour of a visionary theory! Astle gravely observes, that "with respect to *Writings* attributed to the *Antediluvians*, it seems not only decent but rational to say that we know nothing concerning them." Without alluding to living writers, Dr. Parsons, in his erudite "Remains of Japhet," tracing the origin

of the alphabetical character, supposes that *letters* were known to *Adam!* Some too have noticed astronomical libraries in the Ark of Noah! Such learning is a kind of feverish distemper, and such historical memorials are formed of deliriums.

Hugh Broughton, a writer of controversy in the reign of James the First, shews us in a tedious discussion on Scripture chronology, that Rahab was a harlot at *ten* years of age; and enters into many grave discussions concerning the *colour* of Aaron's *Ephod*, the language which *Eve* first spoke, and other classical erudition. This writer is ridiculed in Ben Jonson's Comedies:—he is not without rivals even in the present day!

Chevreau begins his History of the World in these words: "Several learned men have examined in *what season* God created the world, though there could hardly be any season then, since there was no sun, no moon, nor stars. But as the world must have been created in one of the four seasons, this question has exercised the talents of the most curious, and opinions are various. Some say it was in the month of *Nisan*, that is, in the spring: others maintain that it was in the month of *Tisri*, which begins the civil year of the Jews, and that it was on the *sixth day* of this month, which answers to our

September, that *Adam* and *Eve* were created, and that it was on a *Friday*, a little after four o'clock in the afternoon!" This is according to the Rabbinical notion of the eve of the sabbath.

The Irish antiquaries mention *public libraries* that were before the flood; and Paul Christian Ilsker, with profounder erudition, has given an exact catalogue of *Adam's*. Messieurs O'Flaherty, O'Conner, and O'Halloran, have most gravely recorded as authentic narrations the wildest legendary tales; and more recently, to make confusion doubly confounded, others have built up what they call theoretical histories on these wild nursery tales. By which species of black art they contrive to prove that an Irishman is an Indian, and a Peruvian may be a Welshman, from certain emigrations that have taken place many centuries before Christ, and some about two centuries after the flood! Keating, in his "History of Ireland," starts a favourite hero in the giant Partholanus, who was descended from Japher, and landed on the coast of Munster 14th May, in the year of the world 1978. This giant succeeded in his enterprise, but a domestic misfortune attended him among his Irish friends:—his wife exposed him to their laugh by her loose behaviour, and provoked him to such a degree that he killed two

favourite greyhounds; and this the learned historian assures us was the *first* instance of female infidelity ever known in Ireland!

The learned, not contented with Homer's poetical pre-eminence, make him the most authentic historian and most accurate geographer of antiquity, besides endowing him with all the arts and sciences to be found in our Encyclopædia. Even in surgery a treatise has been written to shew by the variety of the *wounds* of his heroes, that he was a most scientific anatomist; and a military scholar has lately told us that from him is derived all the science of the modern adjutant and quarter-master-general; all the knowledge of *tactics* which we now possess, and that Xenophon, Epaminondas, Philip, and Alexander, owed all their warlike reputation to Homer!

To return to pleasanter follies. Des Fontaines, the journalist, who had wit and malice, inserted the fragment of a letter in which the poet Rousseau wrote to the younger Racine whilst he was at the Hague. These were the words: "I enjoy the conversation within these few days of my associates in Parnassus. Mr. Piron is an excellent antidote against melancholy; *but*"—&c. Des Fontaines maliciously stopped at this *but*. In the letter of Rousseau it was, "but unfortunately he departs soon."

Piron was very sensibly affected at this equivocal *but*, and resolved to revenge himself by composing one hundred epigrams against the malignant critic. He had written sixty before Des Fontaines died: but of these only two attracted any notice.

Towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, Antonio Cornezano wrote a hundred different sonnets on one subject; and what subject?—"the eyes of his mistress!" Not inferior to this ingenious trifler is Nicholas Franco, well known in Italian Literature, who employed himself in writing two hundred and eighteen satiric sonnets, chiefly on the famous Peter Aretin. This lampooner had the honour of being executed at Rome for his defamatory publications. In the same class are to be placed two other writers. Brebeuf, who wrote one hundred and fifty epigrams against a painted lady. Another wit, desirous of emulating him, and for a literary bravado, *continued* the same subject, and pointed at this unfortunate fair three hundred more, without once repeating the thoughts of Brebeuf! There is a collection of poems called "*La* PUCE *des grand jours de Poitiers.*" The FLEA of the carnival of Poitiers. These poems were all written by the learned Pasquier upon a FLEA which he found one morning in the bosom of the famous Catherine des Roches!

Gildon, in his "Laws of Poetry," commenting on this line of the Duke of Buckingham's "Essay on Poetry,"

"Nature's chief master-piece is *writing well*:"

very profoundly informs his readers "That what is here said has not the least regard to the *penmanship*, that is, to the fairness or badness of the hand-writing, &c." In this manner he proceeds throughout a whole page, inserting a panegyric on a *fine hand-writing!* Pope's character of Gildon is not exaggerated: he held as heavy a pen of lead as any of the children of dulness.

Littleton, the author of the Latin and English Dictionary, was notoriously addicted to punning, and he has been so absurd as to indulge his favourite propensity so far as even to introduce a pun in the grave and elaborate work of a Lexicon. Dr. Monsey, late of Chelsea College, whose wit and eccentricities were well known, mentioned this passage to the late Duke of Leeds, who, believing the circumstance to be impossible, offered to bet any sum with the doctor, notwithstanding the latter positively asserted that he had read it. A trifling wager was the consequence, and the Duke used after to advert to the matter as an egregious instance of literary folly. The following is the article

alluded to. "CONCURRO, to run with others; to run together; to come together; to fall foul on one another; to CONcur, to CONdog."

Two singular literary follies have been practised on Milton. There is a *prose version* of his "Paradise Lost," which is *translated* from the French version of his Epic! One Green published a specimen of a *new version* of the "Paradise Lost" into *blank verse!* For this purpose he has utterly ruined the harmony of Milton's cadences, by what he conceived to be "bringing that amazing work somewhat *nearer the summit of perfection.*"

A French author when his book had been received by the French Academy, had the portrait of Cardinal Richelieu engraved on his title-page, encircled by a crown of *forty rays*, in each of which was written the name of the celebrated *forty Academicians.*

The self-exultations of authors, frequently employed by injudicious writers, place them in very ridiculous attitudes. A writer of a bad dictionary, which he intended for a Cyclopædia, formed such an opinion of its extensive sale, that he put on the title-page the words "*first edition,*" a hint to the gentle reader that it would not be the last. Desmarests was so delighted with his "Clovis," an Epic Poem, that he solemnly concludes his preface with a thanks-

giving prayer to God, to whom he attributes all its glory. This is like that conceited member of a French parliament, who was overheard, after his tedious harangue, muttering most devoutly to himself, "*Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.*"—"Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name be all the glory."

Baillet informs us of several works which have been produced through some odd coincidence with the *name of their authors.* Thus Du Saussay has written a folio volume, consisting of Panegyrics of persons of eminence, whose christian names were *Andrew;* because *Andrew* was his own name. Two Jesuits made a similar collection of illustrious men whose Christian names were *Theophilus* and *Philip,* being their own. *Anthony Sanderus* has also composed a treatise of illustrious *Anthonies!* And we have one *Buchanan* who has written the lives of those persons who were so fortunate as to have been his namesakes.

Several forgotten writers have frequently been intruded on the public eye, merely through such trifling coincidences as being members of some particular society, or natives of some particular country. Cordeliers have stood forward to revive the writings of Duns Scotus because he had been a Cordelier; and a Jesuit compiled a folio

on the antiquities of a country, merely from the circumstance that the founder of his order, Ignatius Loyola, had been born there. Several of the classics are violently extolled above others, merely for the accidental circumstance of their editors having collected some notes which they resolved to discharge on the public. County histories have been frequently compiled, and provincial writers have received a temporary existence, from the accident of some obscure individual being an inhabitant of some obscure town.

On such literary follies Mallebranche has made this refined observation. The *Critics* standing in some way connected with *the author*, their *self-love* inspires them, and abundantly furnishes eulogiums which the author never merited, that they may thus obliquely reflect some praise on themselves. This is made so adroitly, so delicately, and so concealed, that it is not perceived.

The following are strange inventions, originating in the wilful bad taste of the author. Otto Venius, the master of Rubens, is the author, or designer, of a collection of emblems, when emblems formed the fashionable literature, and has taken his subjects from Horace; but certainly his conceptions were not Horatian. He takes every image in a *literal* sense. Spence

has observed several. If Horace says, "*Misce stultitiam* CONSILIIS BREVEM," behold Venius takes *brevis* personally, and represents folly as a *little short child!* of not above three or four years old! In the emblem which answers Horace's "*Raro antecedentem scelestum deseruit* PEDE PŒNA CLAUDO," we find Punishment with *a wooden leg.*—And for "PULVIS ET UMBRA SUMUS," we have a dark burying vault with *dust* sprinkled about the floor, and a *shadow* walking upright between two ranges of urns. For "*Virtus est vitium fugere, et sapientia prima stultitia caruisse,*" most flatly he gives seven or eight Vices pursuing Virtue, and Folly just at the heels of Wisdom. I saw in an English bible printed in Holland, an instance of the same taste: the artist to illustrate "Thou seest the *mote* in thy neighbour's eye, but not the *beam* in thine own," has actually placed an immense beam which projects from the eye of the caviller to the ground!

As a contrast to the too obvious taste of VENIUS, may be placed Cesare di RIPA, who is the author of an Italian work, which has been translated into most European languages, the *Iconologia;* the favourite book of the age, and the fertile parent of the most absurd children that Taste has known. Ripa is as darkly subtile, as Venius is lucidly gross; and as far-

fetched in his conceits, as the other is too obviously liberal. Ripa represents Beauty by a naked lady, with her head in a cloud; because the true idea of beauty is hard to be conceived! Flattery, by a lady with a flute in her hand, and a stag at her feet, because stags are said to love music so much, that they suffer themselves to be taken, if you play to them on a flute. Fraud, with two hearts in one hand, and a mask in the other:—his collection is too numerous to point out individual instances. Ripa also describes how the allegorical figures are to be coloured; Hope is to have a sky-blue robe, because she always looks towards heaven. Enough of these *Capriccios!*

LITERARY CONTROVERSY.

In the article Milton, of the preceding volume, I had occasion to give some strictures on the asperity of literary controversy: the specimens I brought forward were drawn from his own and Salmasius's writings. If to some the subject has appeared exceptionable, to me, I confess, it seems useful, and I shall therefore add some other particulars; for this topic has many branches. Of the following specimens the grossness and malignity are extreme; yet

they were employed by the first scholars in Europe.

Martin Luther was not destitute of genius, of learning, or of eloquence; but his violence disfigured his works with invectives, and singularities of abuse. The great reformer of superstition had himself all the vulgar ones of his day: he believed that flies were devils; and that he had had a buffeting with Satan when his left ear felt a prodigious beating. Hear him express himself on the Catholic divines; "The Papists are all asses, and will always remain asses. Put them in whatever sauce you chuse, boiled, roasted, baked, fried, skinned, beat, hashed, they are always the same asses."

Gentle and moderate, compared with his salute of his Holiness.—"The Pope was born out of the Devil's posteriors. He is full of devils, lies, blasphemies, and idolatries; he is anti-christ; the robber of churches; the ravisher of virgins; the greatest of pimps; the governor of Sodom, &c. If the Turks lay hold of us, then we shall be in the hands of the Devil; but if we remain with the Pope, we shall be in hell.—What a pleasing sight would it be to see the Pope and the Cardinals hanging on one gallows, in exact order, like the seals which dangle from the bulls of the Pope. What an excellent council would they hold under the gallows!"

Sometimes, desirous of catching the attention of the vulgar, Luther attempts to enliven his style by the grossest buffooneries; "Take care my little Pope! my little ass! go on slowly: the times are slippery: this year is dangerous: if thou fallest, they will exclaim, See! how our little Pope is spoilt!" It was fortunate for the cause of the Reformation that the violence of Luther was softened in a considerable degree at times by the meek Melancthon: he often poured honey on the sting inflicted by the angry bee. Luther was no respecter of kings; he was so fortunate indeed as to find among his antagonists a crowned head; a great good fortune for an obscure controversialist, and the very *punctum saliens* of controversy. Our Henry VIII. wrote his book against the new doctrine: then warm from scholastic studies, Henry presented Leo X. with a work highly creditable to his abilities, and no inferior performance according to the genius of the age. Collier in his Ecclesiastical History has analysed the book, and does not ill describe its spirit: "Henry seems superior to his adversary in the vigour and propriety of his style, in the force of his reasoning, and the learning of his citations. It is true he leans *too much* upon his character, argues in his *garter-robes*, and writes as 'twere with his *scepter*." But Luther in reply abandons his pen to all

kinds of railing and abuse. He addresses Henry VIII. in the following style: "It is hard to say if folly can be more foolish, or stupidity more stupid, than is the head of Henry. He has not attacked me with the heart of a king, but with the impudence of a knave. This rotten worm of the earth, having blasphemed the majesty of my king, I have a just right to bespatter his English majesty with his own dirt and ordure. This Henry has lied." Some of his original expressions to our Henry VIII. are these: "Stulta, ridicula, et verissimè *Henriciana*, et *Thomistica* sunt hæ.—Regem Angliæ Henricum istum plane mentiri, &c.—Hoc agit inquietus Satan, ut nos a Scripturis avocet per *sceleratos Henricos*, &c."—He was repaid with capital and interest by an anonymous reply, said to have been written by Sir Thomas More, who concludes his arguments by leaving Luther in language not necessary to translate: cum suis furiis et furoribus, cum suis merdis et stercoribus cacantem cacatumque." Such were the vigorous elegancies of a controversy on the Seven Sacraments!

Calvin was less tolerable, for he had no Melancthon! His adversaries are never others than knaves, lunatics, drunkards, and assassins! Sometimes they are characterized by the familiar appellatives of bulls, asses, cats, and hogs!

By him Catholic and Lutheran are alike hated. Yet, after having given vent to this virulent humour, he frequently boasts of his mildness. When he reads over his writings, he tells us, that he is astonished at his forbearance; but this, he adds, is the duty of every Christian! at the same time, he generally finishes a period with—"Do you hear, you dog? Do you hear, madman?"

Beza, the disciple of Calvin, sometimes imitates the luxuriant abuse of his master. When he writes against Tilleman, a Lutheran minister, he bestows on him the following titles of honour: "Polyphemus; an ape; a great ass who is distinguished from other asses by wearing a hat; an ass on two feet; a monster composed of part of an ape and wild ass; a villain who merits hanging on the first tree we find." And Beza was, no doubt, desirous of the office of executioner!

The Catholic party is by no means inferior in the felicities of their style. But enough has been exhibited. I shall just observe, that these men were alike supposed by their friends to be the inspired regulators of Religion!

Bishop Bedell, a great and good man, respected even by his adversaries, in an address to his clergy, observes, "Our calling is to deal with errors, not to disgrace the man with scolding words." It is said of Alexander, I think,

when he overheard one of his soldiers railing lustily against Darius his enemy, that he reproved him, and added, "Friend, I entertain thee to fight against Darius, not to revile him;"—and Bedell concludes, "that his sentiments of treating the Catholics are not conformable to the practice of Luther and Calvin; but they were but men, and perhaps we must confess they suffered themselves to yield to the violence of passion."

The Fathers of the church were proficients in the art of abuse, and very ingeniously defend it. St. Austin indeed affirms that the keenest personality may produce a wonderful effect, and open a man's eyes to his own follies. He illustrates his position with a story, given with great simplicity, of his mother Saint Monica with her maid. Saint Monica certainly would have been a confirmed drunkard, had not her maid timely and outrageously abused her. The story will amuse.—"My mother had by little and little accustomed herself to relish wine. They used to send her to the cellar, as being one of the soberest in the family: she first sipped from the jug and tasted a few drops, for she abhorred wine, and did not care to drink. However she gradually accustomed herself, and from sipping it on her lips she swallowed a draught. As people from the smallest

faults insensibly increase, she at length liked wine, and drank bumpers. But one day being alone with the maid who usually attended her to the cellar, they quarrelled, and the maid bitterly reproached her with being a *drunkard!* That *single word* struck her so poignantly that it opened her understanding, and reflecting on the deformity of the vice, she desisted for ever from its use."

The great Arnauld *defended* this mode of controversy; nay, he tells us that it is permitted to jeer, and play the droll, or in his own words, *de boufonner*, since the writings of the holy fathers afford so many instances. It is still more singular, when he not only brings forward as an example of this ribaldry, Elijah *mocking* at the false divinities, but *God* himself *bantering* the first man after his fall. He justifies the injurious epithets which he has so liberally bestowed on his adversaries by the example of Jesus Christ and the apostles! It was on these grounds also that the celebrated Paschal apologized for the invectives with which he has occasionally disfigured his Provincial Letters.

WARE, in his Irish writers, informs us of one Henry Fitzsermon, an Irish Jesuit, who was imprisoned for his papistical designs and seditious preaching. During his confinement he proved himself to have been a great amateur of

controversy. He said "he felt like a *bear* tied to a stake, and wanted somebody to *bait him.*" A kind office, zealously undertaken by the learned *Usher*, then a young man. He *engaged* to *dispute* with him *once a week* on the subject of *antichrist!* They met several times. It appears that *our bear* was out-worried, and declined any further *dog-baiting*, This spread an universal joy through the Protestants in Dublin. Such was the spirit of those times, which appears to have been very different from our own. Dr. Disney gives an anecdote of a modern bishop who was just advanced to a mitre; his bookseller begged to republish a popular theological tract of his against another bishop, because he might now meet him on equal terms. My lord answered—"Mr. *** no more controversy now!" Our good Bishop resembled Baldwin, who, from a simple monk, arrived to the honour of the See of Canterbury.—The successive honours successively changed his manners. Urban the Second inscribed his brief to him in this concise description—*Balduino Monastio ferventissimo, abbate calido, Episcopo tepido, Archiepiscopo remisso!*

On the subject of literary controversies we cannot pass over the various sects of the scholastics; a volume might easily be compiled of their ferocious wars, which in more than one

instance were accompanied by stones and daggers. The most memorable, on account of the extent, the violence and duration of their contests, are those of the NOMINALISTS and REALISTS.

It was a most subtle question assuredly, and the world thought for a long while that their happiness depended on deciding, whether universals, that is *genera*, have a real essence, and exist independent of particulars, that is *species*:—whether for instance, we could form an idea of asses, prior to individual asses? Rosseline in the eleventh century adopted the opinion that universals have no real existence, either before, or in individuals, but are mere names and words by which the kind of individuals is expressed. A tenet propagated by Abelard, which produced the sect of the *Nominalists*. But the *Realists* asserted that universals existed independent of individuals,—though they were somewhat divided between the various opinions of Plato and Aristotle. Of the Realists the most famous were Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. The cause of the Nominalists was almost desperate, till Occam in the fourteenth century revived the dying embers. Louis XI. adopted the Nominalists, and the Nominalists flourished at large in France and Germany; but unfortunately Pope John XXIII. patronised the Realists, and

throughout Italy it was dangerous for a Nominalist to open his mouth. The French king wavered, and the Pope triumphed; his majesty published an edict in 1474, in which he silenced for ever the Nominalists; and ordered their books to be fastened up in their libraties with iron chains, that they might not be read by students! The leaders of that sect fled into England and Germany, where they united their forces with Luther and the first Reformers.

Nothing could exceed the violence with which these disputes were conducted. Vives himself, quoted by Brucker, saw the contests, and says that "when the contending parties had exhausted their stock of verbal abuse, they often came to blows; and it was not uncommon in these quarrels about *universals*, to see the combatants engaging not only with their fists, but with clubs and swords, so that many have been wounded, and some killed."

I add a curious extract from John of Salisbury, on this war of words, which Mosheim has given in his Ecclesiastical History. He observes on all this terrifying nonsense, "that there had been more time consumed in it, than the Cæsars had employed in making themselves masters of the world; that the riches of Crœsus were inferior to the treasures that had been exhausted in this controversy; and that the con-

tending parties, after having spent their whole lives on this single point, had neither been so happy as to determine it to their satisfaction, nor to make in the labyrinths of science where they had been groping, any discovery that was worth the pains they had taken." It may be added that Ramus having attacked Aristotle, for "teaching us chimeras," all his scholars revolted; the parliament put a stop to his lectures, and at length having brought the matter into a law court, he was declared to be "insolent and daring"—the king proscribed his works, he was ridiculed on the stage, and hissed at by his scholars. When at length during the plague, he opened again his schools, he drew on himself a fresh storm by reforming the pronunciation of the letter Q, which they then pronounced like K—Kiskis for Quisquis, and Kamkam for Quamquam. This innovation was once more laid to his charge: a new rebellion! and a new ejection of the Anti-Aristotelian! The brother of that Gabriel Harvey who was the friend of Spenser, and with Gabriel had been the whetstone of the town-wits of his time, distinguished himself by his wrath against the Stagyrite. After having with Gabriel predicted an earthquake, and alarmed the kingdom, which never took place, (that is the earthquake, not the alarm) the wits buffeted him. Nash says of him that

"Tarlton at the theatre made jests of him, and Elderton consumed his ale-crammed nose to nothing, in bear-baiting him with whole bundles of ballads." Marlow declared him to be "an ass fit only to preach of the iron age." Stung to madness by this lively nest of hornets, he avenged himself in a very cowardly manner—he attacked Aristotle himself! for he set *Aristotle* with his *heels upwards* on the school gates at Cambridge, and with *asses ears* on his head!

But this controversy concerning Aristotle and the school divinity was even prolonged so late as in the last century. Father De Benedictis, a Jesuit, and professor in the college at Naples, published in 1688 four volumes of peripatetic philosophy, to establish the principles of Aristotle. The work was exploded, and he wrote an abusive treatise under the *Nom de guerre* of Benedetto Aletino. A man of letters, Constantino Grimaldi, replied. Aletino rejoined; he wrote letters, an apology for the letters, and would have written more for Aristotle than Aristotle himself perhaps would have done. However, Grimaldi was no ordinary antagonist, and not to be outwearied. He had not only the best of the argument, but he was resolved to tell the world so, as long as the world would listen. Whether he killed off Father Benedictis is not affirmed; but the latter

died during the controversy. Grimaldi however afterwards pursued his ghost, and buffeted the father in his grave. This enraged the University of Naples; and the Jesuits, to a man, denounced Grimaldi to Pope Benedict XIII. and Cardinal D'Althan, the Viceroy of Naples. On this the Pope issued a bull prohibiting the reading of Grimaldi's works, or keeping them under pain of excommunication; and the cardinal, more active than the bull, caused all the copies which were found in the author's house to be thrown *into the sea!* The author with tears in his eyes beheld them expatriated, and hardly hoped their voyage would have been successful. However, all the little family of the Grimaldis were not drowned—for a storm arose, and happily drove ashore many of the floating copies, and these falling into good and charitable hands, the heretical opinions of poor Grimaldi against Aristotle and school divinity were still read by those who were not out-terrified by the Pope's bulls. The *salted* passages were still at hand, and quoted with a double zest against the Jesuits!

We now turn to writers whose controversy was kindled only by subjects of polite literature. The particulars form a curious picture of the taste and character of the age.

"There is," says Joseph Scaliger, that great

critic and reviler, "an art of abuse or slandering, of which those that are ignorant may be said to defame others much less than they shew a willingness to defame."

"Literary wars," says Bayle, "are sometimes as lasting as they are terrible." On this topic he notices the dispute of two great scholars, so extremely violent, that it lasted thirty years; he humorously compares its duration to the German war which lasted as long.

Baillet, when he refuted the sentiments of a certain author, always did it without naming him; but when he found any observation which he deemed commendable, he then quoted his name. Bayle observes, that "this is an excess of politeness, prejudicial to that freedom which should ever exist in the republic of letters; that it should be allowed always to name those whom we refute; and that it is sufficient for this purpose that we banish asperity, malice, and indecency."

After these preliminary observations, I shall bring forward various examples where this excellent advice is by no means regarded.

Erasmus produced a dialogue, in which he ridiculed those scholars who were servile imitators of Cicero; so servile, that they would employ no expression but what was found in the works of that writer; every thing with them

was Ciceronianized. This dialogue is written with great humour. Scaliger, the father, who was then unknown to the world, had been long looking for some occasion to distinguish himself; he now wrote a defence of Cicero, but which in fact was one continued invective against Erasmus: he there treats the latter as illiterate, a drunkard, an impostor, an apostate, a hangman, a demon hot from hell! But all this does not exceed the *invectives* of Poggius, who has thus entitled several literary libels composed against some of his adversaries, Laurentius Valla, Philelphus, &c. and who certainly returned the poisoned chalice to his own lips. From these various declamations might be formed a lexicon of scurrility, of obscenity, and calumny. Mr. Shepherd has lately given a copious collection of them in his Life of Poggius.

Scioppius was a worthy successor of the Scaligers: his favourite expression was, that he had trodden down his adversary.

Scioppius was a critic, as skilful as Salmasius or Scaliger, but still more learned in the language of abuse. He was regarded as the Attila of authors. He boasted that he had occasioned the deaths of Casaubon and Scaliger; and such was the impudence of this cynic, that he attacked with repeated satires our James the First, who, as Arthur Wilson informs us, condemned

his writings to be burnt in London. Detested and dreaded as the public scourge, Scioppius, at the close of his life, was fearful he should find no retreat in which he might be secure.

The great Casaubon employs the dialect of St. Giles's in his furious attacks on the learned Dalechamps, the Latin translator of Athenæus. To this great physician he stands more deeply indebted than he chose to confess; and to conceal the claims of this literary creditor, he calls out *Vesanum! Insanum! Tiresiam!* &c. It was the fashion of that day with the redoubtable and ferocious heroes of the literary republic, to overwhelm each other with invective; and to consider their own grandeur to consist in the bulk of their books, and convert their brother giants into miserable dwarfs.

The heat and acrimony of verbal critics have exceeded all description. Their stigmas and Anathemas have been long known to bear no proportion against the offences to which they have been directed. "God confound you," cried one grammarian to another, "for your theory of impersonal verbs!" There was a long and terrible controversy formerly, whether the Florentine dialect was to prevail over the others. The academy was put to great trouble, and the Anti-cruseans were often on the point of annulling this supremacy; *Una Mordace scri-*

tura was applied to one of these literary cannons; and in a letter of those times, the following paragraph appears: "Pescetti is preparing to give a second answer to Beni, which will not please him; I now believe the prophecy of Cavalier Tedeschi will be verified, and that this controversy, begun with pens, will end with poignards!"

Fabretti, an Italian, wrote furiously against Gronovius, whom he calls *Grunnovius*: he compared him to all those animals whose voice was expressed by the word *Grunnire, to grunt.* This Gronovius was so malevolent a critic, that he was distinguished by the title of "Grammatical Cur."

When critics venture to attack the person as well as the performance of an author, I recommend the salutary proceedings of Huberus, the writer of an esteemed Universal History. He had been so roughly handled by Perizonius, that he obliged him to make the *amende honorable* in a court of justice.

Certain authors may be distinguished by the title of LITERARY BOBADILS, or fighting authors. It is said of one of our own celebrated writers, that he drew his sword on a reviewer; and another, when his farce was condemned, offered to fight any one of the audience who hissed. Scudery, brother of the celebrated

Mademoiselle Scudery, was a true Parnassian bully. The first publication which brought him into notice, was his edition of the works of his friend Theophile. He concludes the preface with these singular expressions—"I do not hesitate to declare, that, amongst all the dead, and all the living, there is no person who has any thing to shew that approaches the force of this vigorous genius; but if, amongst the latter, any one were so extravagant as to consider that I detract from his imaginary glory, to shew him, that I fear as little as I esteem him, this is to inform him, that my name is

DE SCUDERY."

A similar rhodomontade is that of Claude Trellon, a poetical soldier: He begins his poems by informing the critics, that if any one attempts to censure him, he will only condescend to answer sword in hand.

ANTI, prefixed to the name of the person attacked, was once a favourite title to books of literary controversy. With a critical review of such books, Baillet has filled a quarto volume; yet, such was the abundant harvest, that he left considerable gleanings for posterior industry.

Anti-Gronovius was a book published against Gronovius, by Kuster. Perizonius, another pugilist of literature, entered into this dispute

on the subject of the Æs grave of the ancients, to which Kuster had just adverted at the close of his volume. What was the consequence? Dreadful!—Answers and rejoinders from both, in which they bespattered each other with the foulest abuse. A journalist pleasantly blames this acrimonious controversy. He says, "To read the pamphlets of a Perizonius and a Kuster on the Æs grave of the ancients, who would not renounce all commerce with antiquity? It seems as if an Agamemnon and an Achilles were railing at each other. Who can refrain from laughter, when one of these commentators even points his attacks at the very name of his adversary? According to Kuster, the name of Perizonius signifies a *certain part* of the human body. How is it possible, that with such a name he could be right concerning the Æs grave? But does that of Kuster promise a better thing, since it signifies a beadle; a man who drives dogs out of churches?—What madness is this!"

Corneille, like our Dryden, felt the acrimony of literary irritation. To the critical strictures of D'Aubignac it is acknowledged he paid the greatest attention, for, after this critic's *Pratique du Theatre* appeared, his tragedies were more artfully conducted. But instead of mentioning the critic with due praise, he preserved an un-

grateful silence. This occasioned a quarrel between the poet and the critic, in which the former exhaled his bile in several abusive epigrams, which have, fortunately for his credit, not been preserved in his works.

The lively Voltaire could not resist the charm of abusing his adversaries. We may smile when he calls a blockhead, a blockhead; a dotard, a dotard; but when he attacks, for a difference of opinion, the *morals* of another man, our sensibility is alarmed. A higher tribunal than that of criticism is to decide on the *actions* of men.

There is a certain disguised malice, which some writers have most unfairly employed in characterizing a contemporary. Burnet called Prior *one Prior*. In Bishop Parker's History of his own times, an innocent reader may start at seeing the celebrated Marvell described as an outcast of society; an infamous libeller; and one whose talents were even more despicable than his person. To such lengths did the hatred of party, united with personal rancour, carry this bishop, who was himself the worst of time-servers. He was, however, amply repaid by the keen wit of Marvell in "The Rehearsal Transprosed," which may still be read with delight, as an admirable effusion of banter, wit, and satire. Le Clerc, a cool ponderous

Greek critic, quarrelled with Boileau about a passage in Longinus, and several years afterwards, in revising Moreri's Dictionary, gave a short sarcastic notice of the poet's brother; in which he calls him the elder brother of *him who has written the book entitled "Satires of Mr. Boileau D'Espreaux l"*—the works of the modern Horace, which were then delighting Europe, he calls, with simple impudence, a book entitled Satires!

The works of Homer produced a controversy both long and virulent, amongst the wits of France. This literary quarrel is of some note in the annals of literature, since it has produced two valuable books; La Motte's "Reflexions sur la Critique," and Madame Dacier's "Des Causes de la Corruption de Gout." Of the rival works it has been said that La Motte wrote with feminine delicacy, and Madame Dacier like an University pedant. "At length," as the author of *Querelles Litteraires* informs us, "by the efforts of Valincour, the friend of art, of artists, and of peace, the contest was terminated." Both parties were formidable in number, and to each he made remonstrances, and applied reproaches. La Motte and Madame Dacier, the opposite leaders, were convinced by his arguments, made reciprocal concessions, and concluded a peace.

The treaty was formally ratified at a dinner given on the occasion by the celebrated Madame De Stael, who represented "Neutrality." Libations were poured to the memory of old Homer, and the parties were reconciled.

LITERARY BLUNDERS.

When Dante published his "Inferno," the simplicity of the age accepted it as a true narrative of his descent into hell.

When the Utopia of Sir Thomas More was first published, it occasioned a pleasant mistake. This political romance represents a perfect, but visionary republic, in an island supposed to have been newly-discovered in America. "As this was the age of discovery (says Granger), the learned Budæus, and others, took it for a genuine history; and considered it as highly expedient, that missionaries should be sent thither, in order to convert so wise a nation to Christianity."

It was a long while after publication that many readers were convinced that Gulliver's Travels were fictitious.

But the most singular blunder was produced by the ingenious "Hermippus Redivivus" of Dr. Campbell, a curious banter on the hermetic philosophy and the universal medicine; but the

grave irony is so well kept up throughout this admirable treatise, that it deceived for a length of time the most learned of that day. His notion of the art of prolonging life, by inhaling the breath of young women, was eagerly credited. A physician, who himself had composed a treatise on health, was so influenced by it, that he actually took lodgings at a female boarding-school, that he might never be without a constant supply of the breath of young ladies. The late Mr. Thicknesse seriously adopted the project. Dr. Kippis acknowledges that after he read the work in his youth, the reasonings and the facts left him several days in a kind of fairy land. I have a copy with manuscript notes by a learned physician, who seems to have had no doubts of its veracity. After all, the intention of the work was long doubtful; till Dr. Campbell informed a friend it was a mere jeu d'esprit; that Bayle was considered as standing without a rival in the art of treating at large a difficult subject, without discovering to which side his own sentiments leaned; and Dr. Campbell had likewise read more uncommon books than most men; he wished to rival Bayle, and at the same time to give the world much unknown matter. He has admirably succeeded, and with this key the whole mystery is unlocked.

Palavicini, in his History of the Council of Trent, to confer an honour on M. Lansac, ambassador of Charles IX. to that council, bestows on him a collar of the order of the Saint Esprit; but which order was not instituted till several years afterwards, by Henry III. A similar voluntary blunder is that of Surita, in his *Anales de la Corona de Aragon.* This writer represents, in the battles he describes, many persons who were not present: and this, merely to confer honour on some particular families.

A book was written in praise of Ciampini by Ferdinand Fabiani, who, quoting a French narrative of travels in Italy, took for the name of the author the following words, found at the end of the title-page, *Enrichi de deux Listes*; that is, "Enriched with two Lists;" on this he observes, "that Mr. Enriched with two lists has not failed to do that justice to Ciampini which he merited." The abridgers of Gesner's Bibliotheca ascribe the romance of Amadis to one *Acuerdo Olvido*; Remembrance, Oblivion. Not knowing that these two words placed on the title-page of the French version of that book, formed the translator's Spanish motto!

D'Aquin, the French king's physician, in his Memoir on the Preparation of Bark, takes *Mantissa*, which is the title of the Appendix

to the History of Plants by Johnstone, for the name of an author, and who, he says, is so extremely rare, that he only knows him by name.

Lord Bolingbroke imagined, that in those famous verses, beginning with *Excudent alii*, &c. Virgil attributed to the Romans the glory of having surpassed the Greeks in historical composition: according to his idea, those Roman historians, whom Virgil preferred to the Grecians, were Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus. But Virgil died before Livy had written his history, or Tacitus was born.

An honest friar, who compiled a church history, has placed in the class of ecclesiastical writers, Guarini, the Italian poet; this arose from a most risible blunder: on the faith of the title of his celebrated amorous pastoral, *Il Pastor fido*, "The Faithful Shepherd," our good father imagined that the character of a curate, vicar, or bishop, was represented in this work.

A blunder has been recorded of the monks in the dark ages, which was likely enough to happen when their ignorance was so dense. A rector of a parish going to law with his parishioners about paving the church, quoted this authority from St. Peter — *Paveant illi, non paveam ego*; which he construed, *They are to pave the church, not I.* This was allowed to be

good law by a judge, himself an ecclesiastic too!

One of the grossest literary blunders of modern times, is that of the late Gilbert Wakefield, in his edition of Pope. He there takes the well known "Song by a Person of Quality," which is a piece of ridicule on the glittering tuneful nonsense of certain poets, as a serious composition. In a most copious commentary, he fatigues himself to prove that every line seems unconnected with its brothers, and that the whole reflects disgrace on its author, &c. A circumstance which too evidently shews how necessary the knowledge of modern literary history is to a modern commentator, and that those who are profound in verbal Greek, are not the best critics on English writers.

Prosper Marchand has recorded a pleasant mistake of Abbé Bizot, one of the principal medallic historians of Holland. Having met with a medal, struck when Philip II. set forth his *invincible Armada*, on which was represented the King of Spain, the Emperor, the Pope, Electors, Cardinals, &c. with their eyes covered with a bandage, and bearing for inscription this fine verse of Lucretius:

O cæcas hominum mentes! O pectora cæca!

prepossessed with the false prejudice, that a

nation persecuted by the Pope and his adherents could not represent them without some insult, he did not examine with sufficient care the ends of the bandages which covered the eyes and waved about the heads of the personages represented on this medal; he rashly took them for *asses ears*, and as such they are engraved.

Mabillon has preserved a curious literary blunder of some pious Spaniards, who applied to the Pope for consecrating a day in honour of *Saint Viar*. His holiness, in the voluminous catalogue of his saints, was ignorant of this one. The only proof brought forwards for his existence was this inscription:

S. VIAR.

An antiquary, however, hindered one more festival in the Catholic calendar, by convincing them that these letters were only the remains of an inscription erected for an ancient surveyor of the roads; and he read their saintship thus;

PRÆFECTUS VIARUM.

Maffei, in his comparison between Medals and Inscriptions, detects a literary blunder in Spon, who, meeting with this inscription,

Maxime VI. Consule.

takes the letters VI for numerals, which occasions a strange anachronism. They are only contractions of *Viro Illustri*—VI.

As absurd a blunder was this of Dr. Stukeley on the coins of Carausius; finding a battered one with a defaced inscription of

FORTVNA AVG.

he read it

ORIVNA AVG.

And sagaciously interpreting this to be the *wife* of Carausius makes a new personage start up in history; he contrives even to give some *theoretical Memoirs* of the *August Oriuna!*

In the Valeriana we find, that it was the opinion of Father Sirmond, that St. Ursula and her eleven thousand Virgins were all created out of a blunder. In some ancient MS. *St. Ursula et Undecimilla V. M.* meaning St. Ursula and Undecimilla, Martyrs, were found; and imagining that *Undecimilla* with the *V.* and *M.* which followed was an abbreviation for *Undecem Millia Martyrum Virginum*, made out of *Two Virgins*, the whole *Eleven thousand!*

Pope, in a note on Measure for Measure, informs us that its story was taken from Cinthio's Novels, *Dec.* 8. *Nov.* 5. That is, *Decade* 8, *Novel* 5. The critical Warburton, in his edition of Shakespeare (as the author of Canons of

Criticism observes) puts the words in full length thus, *December* 8, *November* 5.

Voltaire has given in his Philosophical Dictionary, article *Abus des Mots*, a literary anecdote of a singular nature; a complete *qui pro quo*. When the fragments of Petronius made a great noise in the literary world, Meibomius, an erudit of Lubeck, read in a letter from another learned scholar of Bologna, "We have here *an entire Petronius*, I saw it with mine own eyes, and with admiration." Meibomius in post-haste travels to Italy, arrives at Bologna, and immediately inquires for the librarian Capponi. He asks him if it was true that they had at Bologna *an entire Petronius*. Capponi assures him that it was a thing which had long been public. Can I see this Petronius? Have the kindness to let me examine it. Certainly, replies Capponi. He leads our erudit of Lubeck to the church where reposes *the body of Saint Petronius*. Meibomius bites his lip, calls for his chaise, and takes his flight.

A French translator, when he came to a passage of Swift, in which it is said that the duke of Marlborough *broke* an officer; not being acquainted with this Anglicism, he translated it *roué*, as if the officer had been broke on a wheel: an odious punishment, which neither our national freedom nor humanity would per-

mit a fellow-citizen to suffer from the sentence of his general.

Another French writer, who translated Cibber's play of "*Love's last Shift*," entitled it thus, "*La Derniere Chemise de l'Amour.*" A similar blunder is that of the French writer of Congreve's life, who has taken his *Mourning* for a *Morning* Bride, and translated it *L'Espouse du Matin.*

Sir John Pringle in a work of his mentions his having cured a soldier by the use of two quarts of *Dog and Duck water* daily; a French physician who translated it, specifies it as an excellent *broth* made of a duck and a dog!

A French writer translates the Latin title of a treatise of Philo-Judæus, *Omnis bonus liber est*, Every good man is a free man, by *Tout livre est bon.* It was well for him, observes Jortin, that he did not live within the reach of the Inquisition, which might have taken this as a reflection on the *Index Expurgatorius.*

A similar oversight is this of an English translator, who turned "Dieu *défend* l'adultère," into "God *defends* adultery." Guthrie, in his translation of Du Halde, has "the twenty-sixth day of the new moon." The whole age of the moon is but twenty-eight days. The blunder arose from his mistaking the word *neuvieme* (nine) for *nouvelle* or *neuve* (new).

The facetious Tom Browne committed a strange blunder in his translation of Gelli's Circe. When he came to the word *Starne*, not exactly being aware of its signification, he boldly rendered it *stares*, probably from the similitude of sound; but the succeeding translator more correctly discovered *Starne* to be red-legged partridges!

Dr. Johnson, while composing his Dictionary, sent a note to the Gentleman's Magazine, to inquire the etymology of the word *Curmudgeon*. Having obtained the desired information, he records in his work the obligation to an anonymous letter-writer. "Curmudgeon, s. a vitious way of pronouncing *coeur mechant*. An unknown correspondent." Ash copies the word into his dictionary in this manner, "Curmudgeon, from the French *coeur* unknown, and *mechant* a correspondent."

In Charles II's reign a new collect was drawn, in which a new epithet was added to the King's title, that gave (says Burnet) great offence, and occasioned great raillery. He was stiled *our most religious King*. Whatever the signification of *religious* might be in the *Latin* word, as importing the sacredness of the king's person, yet in the *English language* it bore a signification that was no way applicable to the king. And he was asked by his familiar cour-

tiers, what must the nation think when they heard him prayed for as their *most religious king*?—Literary blunders of this nature are frequently discovered in the versions of good classical scholars, who know little of the genius of their own language; and would make the *English* servilely bend to the Latin and Greek; however it will not bear the yoke their unskilful hands put on its neck. Milton has been justly censured for his free use of Latinisms and Grecisms.

A literary blunder of Thomas Warton is worth recording, as a specimen of the manner in which a man of genius may continue to blunder with infinite ingenuity. In an old romance he finds these lines, describing the duel of Saladin with Richard Cœur de Lion:

> A *Faucon brode* in hande he bare,
> For he thought he wolde thare
> Have slayne Richard.

He imagines this *Faucon brode* means a *falcon bird*, or a hawk, and that Saladin is represented with this bird on his fist to express his contempt of his adversary. He supports his conjecture by noticing a gothic picture, supposed to be the subject of this duel, and also some old tapestry of heroes on horseback with hawks on their fists; he plunges into feudal times where no

gentleman appeared on horseback without his hawk. After all this curious erudition, the rough but skilful Ritson inhumanly triumphed by dissolving the magical fancies of the more elegant Warton, by explaining a *Faucon brode*, to be nothing more than a *brodd faulchion*, which was certainly more useful than a *bird*, in a duel.

A LITERARY WIFE.

Marriage is such a rabble rout,
That those that are out, would fain get in;
And those that are in, would fain get out.

CHAUCER.

In our preceding article, having examined some *literary blunders*, we will now proceed to the subject of a *literary wife*, which may happen to prove one. A learned lady is to the taste of few. It is however matter of surprise, that several literary men should have felt such a want of taste in respect to "their soul's far dearer part," as Hector calls his Andromache. The wives of many men of letters have been dissolute, ill-humoured, slatternly, and have given into all the frivolities of the age. The wife of the learned Budæus was of a different character.

How delightful is it when the mind of the female is so happily disposed, and so richly cul-

tivated, as to participate in the literary avocations of her husband! It is then truly that the intercourse of the sexes becomes the most refined pleasure. What delight, for instance, must the great Budæus have tasted, even in those works which must have been for others a most dreadful labour! His wife left him nothing to desire. The frequent companion of his studies, she brought him the books he required to his desk; she compared passages, and transcribed quotations; the same genius, the same inclinations, and the same ardour for literature, eminently appeared in those two fortunate persons. Far from withdrawing her husband from his studies, she was sedulous to animate him when he languished. Ever at his side and ever assiduous; ever with some useful book in her hand, she acknowledged herself to be a most happy woman. Yet she did not neglect the education of eleven children. She and Budæus shared in the mutual cares they owed their progeny. Budæus was not insensible of his singular felicity. In one of his letters, he represents himself as married to two *ladies;* one of whom gave him boys and girls, the other was Philosophy, who produced books. He says, that in his twelve first years, Philosophy had been less fruitful than Marriage; he had produced less books than children; he had laboured

more corporally than intellectually; but he hoped to make more books than children. "The soul (says he) will be productive in its turn; it will rise on the ruins of the body; a prolific virtue is not given at the same time to the bodily organs and the pen."

The lady of that elegant scholar John Evelyn designed herself the frontispiece to his translation of Lucretius. She felt the same passion in her own breast as animated her husband's, who has written with various ingenuity. Of Baron Haller it is recorded that he inspired his wife and family with a taste for his different pursuits. They were usually employed in assisting his literary occupations; they transcribed Manuscripts, consulted authors, gathered plants, and designed and coloured under his eye. What a delightful family picture has the younger Pliny given posterity in his letters.—See Melmoth's translation, Book IV. Letter XIX. Of Calphurnia, his wife, he says, "Her affection to me has given her a turn to books; and my compositions, which she takes a pleasure in reading, and even getting by heart, are continually in her hands. How full of tender solicitude is she when I am entering upon any cause! How kindly does she rejoice with me when it is over! While I am pleading she places persons to inform her from time to time how I am heard,

what applauses I receive, and what success attends the cause. When at any time I recite my works, she conceals herself behind some curtain, and with secret rapture enjoys my praises. She sings my verses to her lyre, with no other master but love, the best instructor for her guide. Her passion will increase with our days, for it is not my youth or my person which time gradually impairs, but my reputation and my glory, of which she is enamoured."

On the subject of a literary wife, I must introduce to the acquaintance of the reader, Margaret, duchess of Newcastle. She is known at least by her name, as a voluminous writer; for she extended her literary productions to the number of twelve folio volumes.

Her labours have been ridiculed by some wits; but had her studies been regulated by a classical education, she would have displayed no ordinary genius. The *Connoisseur* has quoted her poems; and the verses have been imitated by Milton.

The Duke, her husband, was also an author; his book on horsemanship still preserves his name. He has likewise written comedies, of which Langbaine, in his account of our poets, speaks well; and his contemporaries have not been penurious in their eulogiums. It is true he was a Duke. Shadwell says of him, "That

he was the greatest master of wit, the most exact observer of mankind, and the most accurate judge of humour that ever he knew." The life of the Duke is written (to employ the language of Langbaine) "by the hand of his incomparable duchess." It was published in his life-time. This curious piece of biography now lies before me: it is a folio of 197 pages, and is entitled "The Life of the Thrice Noble, High, and Puissant Prince, William Cavendish." His titles then follow:—"Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious, and Excellent Princess, Margaret Duchess of Newcastle, his Wife. London 1667." This Life is dedicated to Charles the Second; and there is also prefixed a copious epistle to her husband the Duke.

In this epistle the character of our Literary Wife is described with all its peculiarities; and no apology will be required for extracting what relates to our noble authoress. The reader will be amused while he forms a more correct idea of a literary lady with whose name he must be acquainted.

She writes:—"Certainly, my lord, you have had as many enemies and as many friends as ever any one particular person had; nor do I so much wonder at it, since I, a woman, cannot be exempt from the malice and aspersions of spiteful tongues, which they cast upon my

poor writings, some denying me to be the true authoress of them; for your grace remembers well, that those books I put out first to the judgment of this censorious age, were accounted not to be written by a woman, but that somebody else had writ and published them in my name; by which your lordship was moved to prefix an epistle before one of them in my vindication, wherein you assure the world, upon your honour, that what was written and printed in my name was my own; and I have also made known that your lordship was my only tutor, in declaring to me what you had found and observed by your own experience; for I being young when your lordship married me could not have much knowledge of the world; but it pleased God to command his servant Nature to endue me with a poetical and philosophical genius, even from my birth; for I did write some books in that kind before I was twelve years of age, which for want of good method and order I would never divulge. But though the world would not believe that those conceptions and fancies which I writ were my own, but transcended my capacity, yet they found fault, that they were defective for want of learning, and on the other side, they said I had pluckt feathers out of the universities; which was a very preposterous judgment. Truly, my lord, I con-

fess that for want of scholarship, I could not express myself so well as otherwise I might have done in those philosophical writings I published first; but after I was returned with your lordship into my native country, and led a retired country life, I applied myself to the reading of philosophical authors on purpose to learn those names, and words of art that are used in schools; which at first were so hard to me, that I could not understand them, but was fain to guess at the sense of them by the whole context, and so writ them down, as I found them in those authors; at which my readers did wonder and thought it impossible that a woman could have so much learning and understanding in terms of art and scholastical expressions; so that I and my books are like the old apologue mentioned in Æsop, of a father and his son who rid on an ass." Here follows a long narrative of this fable, which she applies to herself in these words—"The old man seeing he could not please mankind in any manner, and having received so many blemishes and aspersions for the sake of his ass, was at last resolved to drown him when he came to the next bridge. But I am not so passionate to burn my writings for the various humours of mankind, and for their finding fault; since there is nothing in this world, be it the noblest and most commendable

action whatsoever, that shall escape blameless. As for my being the true and only authoress of them your lordship knows best; and my attending servants are witness that I have had none but my own thoughts, fancies, and speculations, to assist me; and as soon as I set them down I send them to those that are to transcribe them, and fit them for the press; whereof, since there have been several, and amongst them such as only could write a good hand, but neither understood orthography, nor had any learning (I being then in banishment, with your lordship, and not able to maintain learned secretaries) which hath been a great disadvantage to my poor works, and the cause that they have been printed so false and so full of errors; for besides that I want also skill in scholarship and true writing, I did many times not peruse the copies that were transcribed, lest they should disturb my following conceptions, by which neglect, as I said, many errors are slipt into my works, which yet I hope learned and impartial readers will soon rectify and look more upon the sense than carp at words. I have been a student even from my childhood; and since I have been your lordship's wife I have lived for the most part a strict and retired life, as is best known to your lordship; and therefore my censurers cannot know much of me since they

have little or no acquaintance with me. 'Tis true I have been a traveller both before and after I was married to your lordship, and sometimes shew myself at your lordship's command in public places or assemblies, but yet I converse with few. Indeed, my lord, I matter not the censures of this age, but am rather proud of them; for it shews that my actions are more than ordinary, and, according to the old proverb, It is better to be envied than pitied; for I know well that it is merely out of spite and malice, whereof this present age is so full that none can escape them, and they 'll make no doubt to stain even your lordship's loyal, noble, and heroic actions, as well as they do mine; though your's have been of war and fighting, mine of contemplating and writing: your's were performed publicly in the field, mine privately in my closet; your's had many thousand eye-witnesses; mine none but my waiting-maids. But the great God, that hitherto bless'd both your grace and me, will, I question not, preserve both our fames to after-ages.

Your grace's honest wife,
and humble servant,
M. Newcastle."

The last portion of this life, which consists of the observations and good things which she

had gathered from the conversations of her husband, forms an excellent Ana, and shews that when Lord Orford, in his "Catalogue of Noble Authors," says, that "this stately poetic couple was a picture of foolish nobility," he writes, as he does too often, with extreme levity. But we must now attend to the reverse of our medal.

Many chagrins may corrode the nuptial state of literary men. Females who, prompted by vanity, but not by taste, unite themselves to scholars, must ever complain of neglect. The inexhaustible occupations of a library will only present to such a most dreary solitude. Such a lady declared of her learned husband, that she was more jealous of his books, than his mistresses. While Glover was composing his "Leonidas," his lady avenged herself for this *Homeric* inattention to her. It was peculiar to the learned Dacier to be united to a woman, his equal in erudition and his superior in taste. When she wrote in the Album of a German traveller a verse from Sophocles as an apology for her unwillingness to place herself among his learned friends, that "Silence is the female's ornament," it was a remarkable trait of her modesty. The learned Pasquier was coupled to a female of a different character, since he tells us in one of his Epigrams that to manage

the vociferations of his lady, he was compelled himself to become a vociferator.—"Unfortunate wretch that I am," he cries; "I who am a lover of universal peace! But to have peace I am obliged ever to be at war."

Sir Thomas More was united to a woman of the harshest temper and the most sordid manners. To soften the moroseness of her disposition, "he persuaded her to play on the lute, viol, and other instruments, every day." Whether it was that she had no ear for music, I know not; but she herself never became harmonious as the instrument she touched. All these ladies may be considered as rather too alert in thought, and too spirited in action; but a tame cuckoo bird who is always repeating the same tone, must be very fatiguing! The lady of Samuel Clarke, the great compiler of books in 1680, whose name was anagrammatised to "*suck all cream,*" alluding to his indefatigable labours in sucking all the cream of every other author, without having any cream himself, is described by her husband as having the most sublime conceptions of his illustrious compilations. This appears by her behaviour. He says, "that she never rose from table without making him a curtesy, nor drank to him without bowing, and that his word was a law to her."

I was much surprised in looking over a cor-

respondence of the times, that in 1590 the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry writing to the Earl of Shrewsbury on the subject of his living separated from his countess, uses as one of his arguments for their union the following curious one, which surely shews the gross and cynical feeling which the fair sex excited even among the higher classes of society. The language of this good Bishop is neither that of truth, we hope, nor certainly that of religion.

"But some will saye in your Lordship's behalfe that the Countesse is a sharpe and bitter shrewe, and therefore lieke enough to shorten your lief, if shee should kepe yow company. Indeede, my good Lord, I have heard some say so; but if shrewdnesse or sharpnesse may be a juste cause of separacion between a man and wiefe, I thinck fewe men in Englande would keepe their wives longe; for it is a common jeste, yet trewe in some sence, that there is but one shrewe in all the worlde, and everee man hath her; and so evere man must be ridd of his wiefe that wolde be ridd of a shrewe." It is wonderful this good bishop did not use another argument as cogent, and which would in those times be allowed as something; the name of his lordship, *Shrewsbury*, would have afforded a consolatory *pun!*

The entertaining Marville says that the gene-

rality of ladies married to literary men are so vain of the abilities and merit of their husbands, that they are frequently unsufferable. He illustrates his observation by several anecdotes.

The wife of Barclay, author of "The Argenis," considered herself as the wife of a demi-god. This appeared glaringly after his death: for Cardinal Barberini having erected a monument to the memory of his tutor, next to the tomb of Barclay, Mrs. Barclay was so irritated at this that she demolished his monument, brought home his bust, and declared that the ashes of so great a genius as her husband should never be placed beside so villainous a pedagogue.

Salmasius's wife was a termagant; and Christina said she admired his patience more than his erudition, married to such a shrew. Mrs. Salmasius indeed considered herself as the queen of science, because her husband was acknowledged as sovereign among the critics. She boasted she had for her husband the most learned of all the nobles, and the most noble of all the learned. Our good lady always joined the learned conferences which he held in his study. She spoke loud, and decided with a tone of majesty. Salmasius was mild in conversation, but the reverse in his writings, as our proud Xantippe considered him as acting beneath himself if he did not pour out his abuse, and call every one names!

The wife of Rohault, when her husband gave lectures on the philosophy of Descartes, used to seat herself on these days at the door, and refused admittance to every one shabbily dressed, or who did not discover a genteel air. So convinced was she that, to be worthy of hearing the lectures of her husband, it was proper to appear fashionable. In vain our good lecturer exhausted himself in telling her that fortune does not always give fine cloaths to philosophers.

The ladies of Albert Durer and Berghem were both shrews, and the former compelled that great genius to the hourly drudgery of his profession, merely to gratify her own sordid passion. At length, in despair, Albert ran away from his Tisiphone; she wheedled him back, and not long afterwards he fell a victim to her furious disposition. He died of a broken heart! It is told of Berghem's wife that she would never allow that excellent artist to quit his occupations; and she contrived an odd expedient to detect his indolence. The artist worked in a room above her; ever and anon she roused him by thumping a long stick against the ceiling, while the obedient Berghem answered by stamping his foot, to satisfy Mrs. Berghem that he was not napping!

Ælian had an aversion to the marriage state. Sigonius, a learned and well known scholar,

would never marry, and alleged no inelegant reason; that "Minerva and Venus could not live together."

Matrimony has been considered by some writers as a condition not so well suited to the circumstances of philosophers and men of learning. I transcribe from the General Dictionary. "There is a little tract which professes to examine the question. It has for title, *De Matrimonio Literati, an cœlibem esse, an verò nubere conveniat*, i. e. of the Marriage of a Man of Letters, with an inquiry whether it is most proper for him to continue a Bachelor, or to marry.

"The author alleges the great merit of some women, and particularly that of Gonzaga the consort of Montefeltro, duke of Urbino; a lady of such distinguished accomplishments, that Peter Bembus said, none but a stupid man would not prefer one of her conversations to all the formal meetings and disputations of the philosophers."

"The ladies perhaps will be surprised to find that it is a question among the Learned, *Whether they ought to marry;* and will think it an unaccountable property of learning that it should lay the professors of it under an obligation to disregard the sex. But whatever opinion these gentlemen may have of that amiable

part of the species, it is very questionable whether, in return for this want of complaisance in them, the generality of ladies would not prefer the beau and the man of fashion to the man of sense and learning. However, if the latter be considered as valuable in the eyes of any of them, let there be Gonzagas, and I dare pronounce that this question will be soon determined in *their favour*, and they will find converts enough to their charms."

The sentiments of Sir Thomas Browne, on the consequences of marriage, are very curious, in the second part of his Religio Medici, Sect. 9. When he wrote that work, he said "I was never yet once, and commend their resolutions, who never marry twice."—He calls woman "the rib, and crooked piece of man." He adds, "I could be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to procreate the world without this trivial and vulgar way." He means the union of sexes, which he declares "is the foolishest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and unworthy piece of folly he hath committed." He afterwards declares he is not averse to that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful; I could look a

whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of a horse." He afterwards disserts very profoundly on the musick there is in beauty, "and the silent note which Cupid strikes is far sweeter than the sound of an instrument."

Such were his sentiments when yet youthful, and residing at Leyden; Dutch philosophy had at first chilled his passion; it is probable that the latter afterwards inflamed his philosophy, for he married and had four daughters!

Dr. Cocchi, a modern Italian writer, but apparently a cynic as old as Diogenes, has taken the pains of composing a treatise on the present subject—enough to terrify the boldest *Bachelor* of Arts! He has conjured up every chimera against the marriage of a literary man. He seems however to have drawn his disgusting portrait from his own country; and Mr. Twiss, who has so painfully translated his work in his "Miscellanies," might have left his Italian wife at Florence, and not have introduced her to the chaster beauties of Britain. Dr. Cocchi shews how "a wife falls into impudicity or conjugal infidelity by insensible gradations!" That women from their situation in life "are addicted to falsehood, and fond of trifles and slander." Their capriciousness arising from their ignorance of the vices and virtues of the living world, be-

cause they will not read history!—Their passion for dress and expence, and their irascibility derived from their constitutional delicacy, produces perpetual discords.

At length when the doctor finds a woman as all women ought to be, he opens a new spring of misfortunes which must attend her husband. He dreads one of the probable consequences of matrimony,—progeny, in which we must maintain the children we beget! He thinks the father gains nothing in his old age from the tender offices administered by his own children: he asserts these are much better performed by menials and strangers! The more children he has, the less he can afford to have servants! The maintenance of his children will greatly diminish his property! Another alarming object in marriage is that, by affinity, you become connected with the relations of the wife. The envious and ill-bred insinuations of the mother, the family quarrels, their poverty or their pride, all disturb the unhappy sage who falls into the trap of connubial felicity! But if a sage has resolved to marry, he impresses on him the prudential principle of increasing his fortune by it, and to remember his "additional expences!" Dr. Cocchi seems to have thought that a human being is only to live to act for himself, in a monkish state of self-enjoyment. He had

neither a heart to feel, a head to conceive, nor a pen that could have written one harmonious period, or one beautiful image!

James Petiver, then a bachelor, the friend of Sir Hans Sloane, in an album which I have seen, signs his name, with this date:

"From the Goat tavern in the Strand, London, Nov. 27. In the 34th year of my *freedom*. A. D. 1697."

DEDICATIONS.

I THINK the following authors excelled in this species of literary composition. Doni, an Italian, and literary parasite, dedicated each of his letters, in a book called *La Libraria*, to persons whose names began with the first letter of the epistle; and dedicated the whole collection in another epistle; so that the book, which only consisted of forty-five pages, was dedicated to above twenty persons. This is carrying literary mendicity pretty high. Politi, the editor of the *Martyrologium Romanum* published at Rome in 1751, has improved on the idea of Doni; for to the 365 days of the year of this Martyrology he has prefixed to each an epistle dedicatory. Galland, the author of the Arabian Nights, surpassed them both, by prefixing similar dedica-

tions to each of his one thousand and one nights.

Mademoiselle Scudery tells a remarkable expedient of an ingenious trader in this line—One Rangouze made a collection of letters, which he printed without numbering them. By this means the book-binder who bound his book, put that letter which the author ordered first; by this means all the persons to whom he presented this book, seeing their names at the head, considered themselves under a particular obligation. There was likewise an Italian physician, who having wrote on Hippocrates's Aphorisms, dedicated each book of his Commentaries to one of his friends, and the index to another!

More than one of our own authors have dedications in the same spirit. One B. Spencer in his singular work "Chrysomeson, a golden mean or a middle way for Christians to walk by, 1650," has prefixed nine epistles dedicatory. This was an expedient to procure money (as Granger observes) in lieu of the practice of publishing books by subscription, not then known. Another contrived better than this Spencer. He prefixed a different dedication to a certain number of printed copies, and addressed them to every great man he knew, who he thought relished a morsel of flattery, and would pay

handsomely for a mouthful of fame. Sir Balthazar Gerfier in his "Counsel to Builders," has made up half the work with forty-two Dedications, which he excuses by the example of Antonio Perez; yet in these dedications he scatters a heap of curious things, for he was a very universal genius. Perez, once secretary of state to Philip II. of Spain, dedicates his "Obras," first to "Nuestro sanctissimo Padre," and "Al Sacro Collegio," then follows one to "Henry IV." and then one still more embracing, "A Todos." This philosophical vagabond, driven out of his own country, had to make friends for his existence.—Fuller, in his "Church History," has with admirable contrivance introduced twelve title-pages, besides the general one, and as many particular dedications, and no less than fifty or sixty of those by inscriptions which are addressed to his benefactors, and for which he is severely censured by Heylin.

Warton, vol. III. p. 444, notices the common practice, about the reign of Elizabeth, of our authors dedicating a work at once to a number of the nobility. Chapman's Translation of Homer has sixteen sonnets addressed to lords and ladies. One Henry Lock, in a collection of two hundred religious sonnets, mingles with such heavenly works, the terrestrial

composition of a number of sonnets to his noble patrons; and not to multiply more instances, Spenser, in compliance with this disgraceful custom, or rather in obedience to the established tyranny of patronage, has prefixed to the Fairy Queen, fifteen of these adulatory pieces, which, in every respect, are the meanest of his compositions. At this period all men, as well as writers, looked up to Peers, as on beings on whose smiles or frowns all sublunary good and evil depended.

One of the most singular anecdotes respecting DEDICATIONS in English bibliography, is that of the Polyglot bible of Dr. Castell. Cromwell much to his honour patronised that great labour, and allowed the paper to be imported free of all duties, both of excise and custom. It was published under the protectorate, but many copies had not been disposed of ere Charles II. ascended the throne. Dr. Castell had dedicated the work gratefully to Oliver by mentioning him with peculiar respect in the preface, but he wavered with Richard Cromwell. At the restoration, he cancelled the two last leaves, and supplied their places with three others, which softened down the republican strains, and blotted Oliver's name out of the book of life! The differences in what are now called the *republican* and the *loyal* copies have amused the cu-

rious collectors; and the former being very scarce, are most sought after. I have seen the republican. In the *loyal* copies the patrons of the work are mentioned, but their *titles* are essentially changed; *Serenissimus*, *Illustrissimus*, and *Honoratissimus*, were epithets that dared not shew themselves under the *levelling* influence of the fanatic politician Oliver.

It is a curious literary folly, not of an individual, but of the Spanish nation, who, when the laws of Castile were reduced into a code under the reign of Alfonso X. surnamed the Wise, divided the work into *seven volumes*; the sole cause of which division was, that they might be dedicated to the *seven letters* which formed the name of his majesty!

Never was a gigantic baby of adulation so crammed with the soft pap of *Dedications* as Cardinal Richelieu. French flattery even exceeded itself.—Among the vast number of very extraordinary dedications to this man, in which the divinity itself is disrobed of its attributes to bestow them on this miserable creature of vanity, I suspect that even the following one is not the most blasphemous he received. "Who has seen your face without being seized by those softened terrors which made the prophets shudder when God shewed the beams of his glory? But as him whom they dared not to approach

in the burning bush, and in the noise of thunders, appeared to them sometimes in the freshness of the zephyrs, so the softness of your august countenance dissipates at the same time; and changes into dew the small vapours which cover its majesty." One of these herd of dedicators, after the death of Richelieu, suppressed in a second edition his hyperbolical panegyric, and as a punishment he inflicted on himself, dedicated the work to Jesus Christ!

The same taste characterises our own dedications in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. The great Dryden has carried it to an excessive height; and nothing is more usual than to compare the *patron* with the *Divinity*—and at times a fair inference may be drawn that the former was more in the author's mind than God himself! A Welsh bishop made an *apology* to James I. for *preferring* the Deity —— to his Majesty!

PHILOSOPHICAL DESCRIPTIVE POEMS.

THE BOTANIC GARDEN opened a new route through the trodden groves of Parnassus. The poet, with a prodigality of IMAGINATION, united all the minute accuracy of SCIENCE. It is a highly-repolished labour, and was in the mind

and in the hand of its author for twenty years before its first publication. The excessive polish of the verse to some has appeared too high to be endured throughout a long composition; it is certain that, in poems of length, a versification, which is not too florid for lyrical compositions, will offend by its brilliancy. Darwin, in as much as a rich philosophical fancy constitutes a poet, possesses the entire art of poetry; no one has carried the curious mechanism of verse and the artificial magic of poetical diction to higher perfection. His volcanic head flamed with imagination, but his torpid heart slept unawakened by passion. His standard of poetry is by much too limited; he supposes that the essence of poetry is something of which a painter can make a picture. A picturesque verse was with him a verse completely poetical. But the language of the passions has no connexion with this principle; in truth, what he delineates as poetry itself, is but a province of poetry. Deceived by his illusive standard, he has composed a poem which is perpetually fancy, and never passion. Hence his processional splendour fatigues, and his descriptive ingenuity comes at length to be deficient in novelty, and all the miracles of art cannot supply us with one touch of nature. This uniformity which prevails throughout the work

might have been obviated, had a fable been invented to connect, in some degree, its numerous descriptions, and to animate the whole by an unity of interest; at present they lie together like unstrung pearls.

Descriptive poetry should be relieved by a skilful intermixture of passages addressed to the heart as well as to the imagination: perpetual description satiates; and has been considered as one of the inferior branches of poetry. Of this both Thomson and Goldsmith were sensible. In their beautiful descriptive poems they knew the art of animating the pictures of FANCY with the glow of SENTIMENT.

Whatever may be thought of the originality of this poem, it has been preceded by others of a congenial disposition. Brookes's poem on "Universal Beauty," published about 1735, presents us with the very model of Darwin's versification; and the Latin poem of De la Croix, in 1727, intitled "*Connubia Florum*" with his subject. There also exists a race of poems which have hitherto been confined to *one object*, which the poet selected from the works of nature, to embellish with all the splendour of poetic imagination. I have collected some titles.

Perhaps it is Homer, in his Battle of the *Frogs and Mice*, and Virgil in the poem on a

Gnat, attributed to him, who have given birth to these lusory poems. The Jesuits, particularly when they composed in Latin verse, were partial to such subjects. There is a little poem on *Gold*, by P. Le Fevre, distinguished for its elegance; and Brumoy has given the *Art of making Glass*; in which he has described its various productions with equal felicity and knowledge. P. Vaniere has written on *Pigeons*, Du Cerceau on *Butterflies*. The success which attended these productions produced numerous imitations, of which several were favourably received. Vaniere composed three on the *Grape*, the *Vintage*, and the *Kitchen Garden*. Another poet selected *Oranges* for his theme; others have chosen for their subjects, *Paper*, *Birds*, and fresh-water *Fish*. Tarillon has inflamed his imagination with *Gunpowder*; a milder genius, delighted with the oaten pipe, sang of *Sheep*; one who was more pleased with another kind of pipe, has written on *Tobacco*; and a droll genius wrote a poem on *Asses*. Two writers have formed didactic poems on the *Art of Enigmas*, and on *Ships*.

Others have written on moral subjects. Brumoy has painted the *Passions*, with a variety of imagery and vivacity of description; P. Meyer has disserted on *Anger*; Tarillon, like our Stillingfleet, on the *Art of Conversation*; and a

lively writer has discussed the subjects of *Humour and wit.*

Giannetazzi, an Italian Jesuit, celebrated for his Latin poetry, has composed two volumes of poems on *Fishing* and *Navigation.* Fracastor has written delicately on an indelicate subject, his *Syphilis.* Le Brun wrote a delectable poem on *Sweetmeats;* another writer on *Mineral Waters,* and a third on *Printing.* Vida pleases with his *Silk-worms* and his *Chess;* Buchanan is ingenious with his *Sphere.* Malapert has aspired to catch the *Winds;* the philosophic Huet amused himself with *Salt,* and again with *Tea.* The *Gardens* of Rapin is a finer poem than critics generally can write; Quillet's *Callipedia,* or Art of getting handsome Children, has been translated by Rowe; and Du Fresnoy at length gratifies the connoisseur with his poem on *Painting,* by the embellishments which his verses have received from the poetic diction of Mason, and the commentary of Reynolds.

This list might be augmented with a few of our own poets, and there still remain some virgin themes which only require to be touched by the hand of a true poet. The judicious authors of the "Memoirs of Trevoux" observe, in their review of the poem on *Gold* above-mentioned, "That poems of this kind have the advantage of instructing us very agreeably. All

that has been most remarkably said on the subject is united, compressed in a luminous order, and dressed in all the agreeable graces of poetry. Such writers have no little difficulties to encounter: the expression costs dear; and still more to give to an arid topic an agreeable form, and to elevate the meanness of the subject without falling into another extreme.—In the other kinds of poetry the matter assists and prompts genius; here we must possess an abundance to display it."

PAMPHLETS.

MYLES DAVIES'S "ICON LIBELLORUM, or a Critical History of Pamphlets," affords some curious information; and as this is a *pamphlet*-reading age, I shall give a sketch of its contents.

The author is at once serious and humorous in his preface. He there observes: "From PAMPHLETS may be learned the genius of the age, the debates of the learned, the follies of the ignorant, the *bévues* of government, and the mistakes of the courtiers. Pamphlets furnish beaus with their airs, coquets with their charms. Pamphlets are as modish ornaments to gentlewomen's toilets as to gentlemen's pockets; they carry reputation of wit and learning to all that make them their companions; the poor

find their account in stall-keeping and in hawking them; the rich find in them their shortest way to the secrets of church and state. There is scarce any class of people but may think themselves interested enough to be concerned with what is published in pamphlets, either as to their private instruction, curiosity, and reputation, or to the public advantage and credit; with all which both ancient and modern pamphlets are too often over familiar and free.—In short, with pamphlets the booksellers and stationers adorn the gaiety of shop-gazing. Hence accrues to grocers, apothecaries, and chandlers, good furniture, and supplies to necessary retreats and natural occasions. In pamphlets lawyers will meet with their chicanery, physicians with their cant, divines with their Shiboleth. Pamphlets become more and more daily amusements to the curious, idle, and inquisitive; pastime to gallants and coquets; chat to the talkative, catch-words to informers; fuel to the envious; poison to the unfortunate; balsam to the wounded; employment to the lazy; and fabulous materials to romancers aud novelists."

This author sketches the origin and rise of pamphlets. He deduces them from the short writings published by the Jewish Rabbins; various little pieces at the time of the first propagation of Christianity; and notices a certain

pamphlet which was pretended to have been the composition of Jesus Christ, thrown from heaven, and picked up by the archangel Michael at the entrance of Jerusalem. It was copied by the priest Leora, and sent about from priest to priest, till Pope Zachary ventured to pronounce it a *forgery!* He notices several such extraordinary publications, many of which produced as extraordinary effects. Some of which are noticed in this work.

He proceeds in noticing the first Arian and Popish pamphlets, or rather *libels*, i. e. little books, as he distinguishes them. He relates a curious anecdote respecting the forgeries of the monks. Archbishop Usher detected in a manuscript of St. Patrick's life, pretended to have been found at Louvain, as an original of a very remote date, several passages taken, with little alteration, from his own writings.

The following notice of our immortal Pope I cannot pass over: "Another class of pamphlets writ by Roman Catholics is that of *Poems*, written chiefly by a *Pope* himself, a gentleman of that name. He passed always amongst most of his acquaintance for what is commonly called a Whig; for it seems the Roman politics are divided as well as Popish missionaries. However one *Esdras*, an apothecary, as he qualifies himself, has published a piping-hot pamphlet against

Mr. Pope's "*Rape of the Lock*," which he entitles "*A Key to the Lock*," wherewith he pretends to unlock nothing less than a *plot* carried on by Mr. Pope in that poem against the last and this present ministry and government."

He observes on *Sermons*,—"'Tis not much to be questioned, but of all modern pamphlets what or wheresoever, the *English stitched Sermons* be the most edifying, useful, and instructive, yet they could not escape the critical Mr. Bayle's sarcasm. He says, "Republique des Lettres," March 1710, in his article *London*, "We see here sermons swarm daily from the press. Our eyes only behold manna: are you desirous of knowing the reason? It is, that the ministers being allowed to *read* their sermons in the pulpit, *buy all they meet with*, and take no other trouble than to read them, and thus pass for very able scholars at a very cheap rate!"

He now begins more directly the history of pamphlets, which he branches out from four different etymologies. He says, "However foreign the word *Pamphlet* may appear, it is a genuine English word, rarely known or adopted in any other language: its pedigree cannot well be traced higher than the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. In its first state wretched must have been its appearance, since the great linguist John Minshew, in his "*Guide into*

Tongues," printed in 1617, gives it the most miserable character of which any libel can be capable. Mr. Minshew says (and his words were quoted by Lord Chief Justice Holt), "A PAMPHLET, that is *Opusculum Stolidorum*, the diminutive performance of fools; from πᾶν, all, and πλήθω, I *fill*, to wit, *all* places. According to the vulgar saying, all things are full of fools, or foolish things; for such multitudes of pamphlets, unworthy of the very name of libels, being more vile than common shores and the filth of beggars, and being flying papers daubed over and besmeared with the foams of drunkards, are tossed far and near into the mouths and hands of scoundrels; neither will the sham oracles of Apollo be esteemed so mercenary as a Pamphlet."

Those who will have the word to be derived from PAM, the famous knave of Loo, do not differ much from Minshew; for the derivation of the word *Pam*, is in all probability from πᾶν, *all;* or the *whole* or the *chief* of the game.

Under this *first* etymological notion of Pamphlets, may be comprehended the *vulgar stories* of the Nine Worthies of the World, of the Seven Champions of Christendom, Tom Thumb, Valentine and Orson, &c. as also most of apocryphal lucubrations. The greatest collection of this first sort of Pamphlets are the Rabbinic tradi

tions in the Talmud, consisting of fourteen volumes in folio, and the Popish legends of the Lives of the Saints, which, though not finished, form fifty folio volumes, all which tracts were originally in pamphlet forms.

The *second* idea of the *radix* of the word *Pamphlet* is, that it takes its derivations from πᾶν, *all*, and φιλέω, *I love*, signifying a thing beloved by all; for a pamphlet being of a small portable bulk, and of no great price, is adapted to every one's understanding and reading. In this class may be placed all stitched books on serious subjects, the best of which fugitive pieces have been generally preserved, and even reprinted in collections of some tracts, miscellanies, sermons, poems, &c.; and, on the contrary, bulky volumes have been reduced, for the convenience of the public, into the familiar shapes of stitched pamphlets. Both these methods have been thus censured by the majority of the lower house of convocation 1711. These abuses are thus represented: "They have re-published, and collected into volumes, pieces written long ago on the side of infidelity. They have reprinted together in the most contracted manner, many loose and licentious pieces, in order to their being purchased more cheaply, and dispersed more easily."

The *third* original interpretation of the word

Pamphlet may be that of the learned Dr. Skinner, in his *Etymologicon Linguæ Anglicanæ*, that it is derived from the Belgic word *Pampier*, signifying a little paper, or libel. To this third set of Pamphlets may be reduced all sorts of printed single sheets, or half sheets, or any other quantity of single paper prints, such as Declarations, Remonstrances, Proclamations, Edicts, Orders, Injunctions, Memorials, Addresses, News-papers, &c.

The *fourth* radical signification of the word Pamphlet is that homogeneal acceptation of it, viz. as it imports any little book, or small volume whatever, whether stitched or bound, whether good or bad, whether serious or ludicrous. The only proper Latin term for a Pamphlet is *Libellus*, or little book. This word indeed signifies in English an *abusive* paper or little book, and is generally taken in the worst sense.

After all this display of curious literature, the reader may smile at the guesses of Etymologists; particularly when he is reminded that the derivation of *Pamphlet* is drawn from quite another meaning to any of the present, by Johnson, which I shall give for his immediate gratification.

PAMPHLET [*par un filet*, Fr. Whence this word is written anciently, and by Caxton, *paunflet*] a small book; properly a book sold unbound, and only stitched.

The French have borrowed the word *Pamphlet* from us, and have the goodness of not disfiguring its orthography. *Roast Beef* is also in the same predicament. I conclude that *Pamphlets* and *Roast Beef* have therefore their origin in our country.

I am favoured by Mr. Pinkerton with the following curious notice concerning pamphlets:

Of the etymon of *pamphlet* I know nothing; but that the word is far more ancient than is commonly believed, take the following proof from the celebrated *Philobiblion*, ascribed to Richard de Buri, bishop of Durham, but written by Robert Holkot, at his desire, as Fabricius says, about the year 1344, (Fabr. Bibl. Medii ævi, Vol. I.); it is in the eighth chapter.

"Sed revera libros non libras maluimus; codicesque plus dileximus quam florenos: ac PANFLETOS exiguos phaleratis prætulimus palescedis."

"But, indeed, we prefer books to pounds; and we love manuscripts better than florins; and we prefer small *pamphlets* to war-horses.

This word is as old as Lydgate's time; among his works, quoted by Thomas Warton, is a poem "translated from a *pamflete* in Frensche."

LITTLE BOOKS.

MYLES DAVIES has given an opinion of the advantages of Little Books with some wit and humour.

"The smallness of the size of a book was always its own commendation; as, on the contrary, the largeness of a book is its own disadvantage, as well as terror of learning. In short, a big book is a scare-crow to the head and pocket of the author, student, buyer, and seller, as well as a harbour of ignorance; hence the inaccessible masteries of the inexpugnable ignorance and superstition of the ancient heathens, degenerate Jews, and of the popish scholasters and canonists entrenched under the frightful bulk of huge, vast, and innumerable volumes; such as the great folio that the Jewish rabbins fancied in a dream was given by the angel Raziel to his pupil Adam, containing all the celestial sciences. And the volumes writ by Zoroaster, entitled The Similitude, which is said to have taken up no more space than 1,260 hides of cattle: as also the 25,000, or, as some say, 36,000 volumes, besides 525 lesser MSS. of his. The grossness and multitude of Aristotle and Varro's books were both a prejudice to the authors, and an hindrance to learning, and an occa-

sion of the greatest part of them being lost. The largeness of Plutarch's treatises is a great cause of his being neglected, while Longinus and Epictetus, in their pamphlet Remains, are every one's companions. Origen's 6,000 volumes (as Epiphanius will have it) were not only the occasion of his venting more numerous errors, but also for the most part of their perdition.——Were it not for Euclid's Elements, Hippocrates's Aphorisms, Justinian's Institutes, and Littleton's Tenures in small pamphlet volumes, young mathematicians, freshwater physicians, civilian novices, and *les apprentices en la ley d'Angleterre*, would be at a loss and stand, and total discouragement. One of the greatest advantages the *Dispensary* has over *King Arthur* is its pamphlet size. So Boileau's Lutrin, and his other pamphlet poems, in respect of Perrault's and Chapelain's St. Paulin and la Pucelle. *These* seem to pay a deference to the reader's quick and great understanding; *those* to mistrust his capacity, and to confine his time as well as his intellect."

Notwithstanding so much may be alleged in favour of books of a small size, yet the scholars of a former age regarded them with contempt. Scaliger, says Baillet, cavils with Drusius for the smallness of his books; and one of the great printers of the time (Moret, the successor of

Plantin) complaining to the learned Puteanus, who was considered as the rival of Lipsius, that his books were too small for sale, and that purchasers turned away, frightened at their diminutive size; Puteanus referred him to Plutarch, whose works consist of small treatises; but the printer took fire at the comparison, and turned him out of his shop, for his vanity at pretending that he wrote in any manner like Plutarch! a specimen this of the politeness and reverence of the early printers for their learned authors! Jurieu reproaches Colomies that he is *a great author of little books!*

At least, if a man is the author only of little books, he will escape the sarcastic observation of Cicero on a voluminous writer—that "his body might be burned with his writings;" which has been applied with great propriety to the worthlessness and magnitude of Albert the Great's twenty-one folio volumes!

It was the literary humour of a certain Mæcenas, who cheered the lustre of his patronage with the steams of a good dinner, to place his guests according to the size and thickness of the books they had printed. At the head of the table sat those who had published in *folio, folissimo;* next the authors in *quarto;* then those in *octavo.* At that table Blackmore would have had the precedence of Gray. Addison, who

found this anecdote in one of the Anas, has seized this idea, and applied it with his felicity of humour in No. 529 of the Spectator.

Montaigne's works have been called by a Cardinal, "The Breviary of Idlers." It is therefore the book for many men. Francis Osborne has a ludicrous image in favour of such opuscula. "Huge volumes, like the ox roasted whole at Bartholomew fair, may proclaim plenty of labour, but afford less of what is *delicate, savoury*, and *well-concocted*, than SMALLER PIECES."

In the list of titles of minor works, which Aulus Gellius has preserved, the lightness and beauty of such compositions are charmingly expressed. Among these we find—a Basket of Flowers; an embroidered Mantle; and a Variegated Meadow.

A CATHOLIC'S REFUTATION.

IN a religious book published by a fellow of the society of Jesus, entitled, "The Faith of a Catholic," the author examines what concerns the incredulous Jews and other infidels. He pretends to shew that Jesus Christ, author of the religion which bears his name, did not impose on or deceive the Apostles whom he taught; that the Apostles who preached it did not deceive those who were converted; and that those

who were converted did not deceive us. In proving these three difficult propositions (difficult for infidels) he says, he confounds "the *Atheist*, who does not believe in God; the *Pagan*, who adores several; the *Deist*, who believes in one God, but who rejects a particular Providence; the *Freethinker*, who presumes to serve God according to his fancy, without being attached to any religion; the *Philosopher*, who takes reason and not revelation for the rule of his belief; the *Gentile*, who never having regarded the Jewish people as a chosen nation, does not believe God promised them a Messiah; and finally, the *Jew*, who refuses to adore the Messiah in the person of Christ."

I have given this sketch, as it serves for a singular Catalogue of *Heretics*.

It is rather singular that so late as in the year 1765, a work should have appeared in Paris, which bears the title I translate, "The Christian Religion *proved* by a *single fact*; or a dissertation in which is shewn that those *Catholics* of whom Huneric, King of the Vandals, cut the tongues, *spoke miraculously* all the remainder of their days; from whence is deduced the *consequences of this miracle* against the Arians, the Socinians, and the Deists, and particularly against the author of Emilius, by solving their difficulties." It bears this Epigraph; "*Ecce*

Ego admirationem faciam populo huic, miraculo grandi et stupendo." There needs no further account of this book than the title.

The cause of Religion is more hurt by stupid advocates than by lively assailants.

THE GOOD ADVICE OF AN OLD LITERARY SINNER.

THERE have been, in all the flourishing ages of literature, authors who, although little able to boast of literary talents, have unceasingly harassed the public; and have at length been remembered only by the number of wretched volumes their unhappy industry has produced. Such an author was the Abbé de Marolles, the subject of this article.

This Abbé was a most egregious scribbler; and so tormented with violent fits of printing, that he even printed lists and catalogues of his friends. I have even seen at the end of one of his works a list of names of those persons who had given him books! He printed his works at his own expence, as the booksellers had unanimously decreed this. Menage used to say of his works, "The reason why I esteem the productions of the Abbé is, for the singular neatness of their bindings; he embellishes them so beautifully, that the eye finds pleasure in them."

On a book of his versions of the Epigrams of Martial, this Critic wrote, *Epigrams against Martial.* Latterly, for want of employment, our Abbé began a translation of the Bible! But having inserted the notes of the visionary Isaac de la Peyrere, the work was burnt by order of the ecclesiastical court. He was also an abundant writer in verse, and exultingly told a poet, that his verses cost him little; "They cost you what they are worth," replied the sarcastic critic. De Marolles is one of those authors who shew that it is possible to be an honest man, but at the same time a detestable writer. In his *Memoirs* he bitterly complains of the injustice done to him by his contemporaries; and says, that in spite of the little favours shewn to him by the public, he has nevertheless published, by an accurate calculation, one hundred and thirty-three thousand one hundred and twenty-four verses! He is a proof that a translator may perfectly understand the language of his original, though incapable of retaining its spirit.

In the early part of his life this unlucky author had not been without ambition; it was only when he was disappointed in his political projects that he resolved to devote himself to letters. As he was incapable of attempting original composition, he became known by his unlucky versions. He wrote above eighty volumes,

which have never found favour in the eyes of the critics; yet I am told his translations are not without their use.

The most remarkable anecdote respecting these translations is, that whenever this honest translator came to a difficult passage, he wrote in the margin "I have not translated this passage, because it is very difficult, and in truth I could never understand it." He persisted to the last in his uninterrupted amusement of printing books, and his readers having long ceased, he was compelled to present them to his friends, who, however, were not his readers. After a literary existence of forty years, he gave the public a work not destitute of entertainment. It is his own Memoirs; which he has dedicated to his relations and all his illustrious friends. The postscript to his Epistle Dedicatory deserves to be brought forward for its singularity, as well as for the excellent counsel he gives to authors.

"I have omitted to tell you, that I do not advise any one of my relatives or friends to apply himself as I have done to study, and particularly to the composition of books, if he thinks that will add to his fame or fortune. I am persuaded that of all persons in the kingdom, none are more neglected than those who devote themselves entirely to letters. The small number of successful persons in that class (at present I do

not recollect more than two or three) should not impose on one's understanding, nor any consequence from them be drawn in favour of others. I know how it is by my own experience, and by that of several amongst you, as well as by many who are now no more, and with whom I was acquainted. Believe me, gentlemen! to pretend to the favours of fortune it is only necessary to render one's self useful; and to be supple and obsequious to those who are in possession of credit and authority; to be handsome in one's person; to adulate the powerful; to smile, while you suffer from them every kind of ridicule and contempt whenever they shall do you the honour to amuse themselves with you; never to be frightened at a thousand obstacles which may be opposed to one; have a face of brass and a heart of stone; insult worthy men who are persecuted; rarely venture to speak the truth; appear devout, with every nice scruple of religion, while at the same time every duty must be abandoned when it clashes with your interest. After these any other accomplishment is indeed superfluous."

MYSTERIES, MORALITIES, FARCES, AND SOTTIES.

THE origin of the theatrical representations of the ancients has been traced back to a Grecian stroller in a cart singing to the honour of Bacchus. Our European exhibitions, perhaps as rude in their commencement, were likewise for a long time devoted to pious purposes, under the titles of Mysteries and Moralities, &c. Of these extravagant compositions I have collected some anecdotes and some specimens.

It is generally allowed that pilgrims introduced these devout spectacles. Those who returned from the Holy Land, or other consecrated places, composed canticles of their travels, and amused their religious fancies by interweaving scenes of which Christ, the Apostles, and other objects of devotion, served as the themes. Menestrier informs us that these pilgrims travelled in troops, and stood in the public streets, where they recited their poems, with their staff in hand; while their chaplets and cloaks, covered with shells and images of various colours, formed a picturesque exhibition which at length excited the piety of the citizens to erect occasionally a stage on an extensive spot of ground. These spectacles served as the amusement and instruction of the people. So attractive were these gross exhibitions in the

dark ages, that they formed one of the principal ornaments of the reception which was given to princes when they entered towns.

When the Mysteries were performed at a more improved period, the actors were distinguished characters, and frequently consisted of the ecclesiastics of the neighbouring villages who incorporated themselves under the title of *Confreres de la Passion*. Their productions were divided, not into acts, but into different days of performance, and they were performed in the open plain. This was at least conformable to the critical precept of that mad knight whose opinion is noticed by Pope. It appears by a MS. in the Harleian Library quoted by Warton, that they were thought to contribute so much to the information and instruction of the people, that one of the Popes granted a pardon of one thousand days to every person who resorted peaceably to the plays performed in the Whitsun-week at Chester, beginning with the "Creation," and ending with the "General Judgment." These were performed at the expence of the different trading companies of that city, and the reader may smile at these ludicrous combinations. "The Creation" was performed by the Drapers; the "Deluge" by the Dyers; "Abraham, Melchisedech, and Lot," by the Barbers; "The Purification" by the Black-

101651

smiths; "The Last Supper" by the Bakers; the "Resurrection" by the Skinners; and the "Ascension" by the Taylors. In these pieces the actors represented the person of the Almighty without being sensible of the gross impiety. So unskilful were they in this infancy of the theatrical art, that very serious consequences were produced by their ridiculous blunders and ill-managed machinery. In the "History of the French Theatre," vol. ii. p. 285, the following genuine and singular anecdotes are preserved, concerning a Mystery which took up several days in the performance.

"In the year 1437, when Conrad Bayer, bishop of Metz, caused the Mystery of "The Passion" to be represented on the plain of Veximel near that city, *God* was *an old gentleman*, named Mr. Nicholas Neufchatel of Touraine, curate of Saint Victory of Metz, and who was very near expiring on the cross had he not been timely assisted. He was so enfeebled that it was agreed another priest should be placed on the cross the next day, to finish the representation of the person crucified; and which was done; at the same time the said Mr. Nicholas undertook to perform "The Resurrection," which being a less difficult task, he did it admirably well.—Another priest whose name was Mr. John De Nicey, curate of Metrange, personated

Judas, and he had like to have been stifled while he hung on the tree, for his neck slipped; this being at length luckily perceived, he was quickly cut down and recovered."

John Bouchet, in his "Annales d'Aquitaine," (a work which contains many curious circumstances of the times, written with that agreeable simplicity which characterises the old writers,) informs us, that in 1486 he saw played and exhibited in Mysteries by persons of Poitiers, "The Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ," in great triumph and splendour; there were assembled on this occasion most of the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbouring counties.

We will now examine the Mysteries themselves. I prefer for this purpose to give a specimen from the French, for our own are too pious and too dull. It is necessary to premise to the reader, that my versions being in prose will probably lose much of that quaint expression and vulgar *naïveté* which prevail through the originals, written in verses of eight syllables.

One of these Mysteries has for its subject the election of an Apostle to supply the place of the traitor Judas. A dignity so awful is conferred in the meanest manner it is possible to conceive; it is done by drawing two straws, of which he who gets the longest becomes the Apostle.

Louis Chocquet was a favourite composer of these religious performances: when he attempts the pathetic he has constantly recourse to Devils; but, as these characters are sustained with little propriety, his pathos excites a smile. Could any infidel in these days of infidelity more completely ridicule the Apostles than is done in the following dialogue? Anne and Caiaphas are introduced conversing about Saint Peter and Saint John:—

"ANNE.

"I remember them once very honest people. They have often brought their fish to my house to sell.

"CAIAPHAS.

"Is this true?

"ANNE.

"By God it is true; my servants remember them very well. To live more at their ease they have left off business; or perhaps they were in want of customers. Since that time they have followed Jesus, that wicked heretic, who has taught them magic; the fellow understands necromancy, and is the greatest magician alive, as far as Rome itself."

Saint John attacked by the satellites of Domitian, amongst whom the author has placed Longinus and Patroclus, gives regular answers to their insulting interrogatories. Some of these I shall transcribe, but leave to the reader's conjectures the replies of the Saint, which are not difficult to anticipate.

" PARTHEMIA.

" You tell us strange things, to say there is but one God in three persons.

" LONGINUS.

" Is it any where said that we must believe your old prophets (with whom your memory seems overburdened) to be more perfect than our Gods?

" PATROCLUS.

" You must be very cunning to maintain impossibilities. Now listen to me: Is it possible that a virgin can bring forth a child without some fracture in the birth of the infant, and ceasing to be a virgin?

" DOMITIAN.

" Will you not change these foolish sentiments? Would you pervert us? Will you not convert yourself? Lords! you perceive now very clearly what an obstinate fellow this is! Therefore let him be stript and put in a great cauldron of boiling oil. Let him die at the Latin gate.

" PESART.

" The great devil of hell fetch me if I don't Latinise him well. Never shall they hear at the Latin gate any one sing so well as he shall sing.

" TORNEAU.

" I dare venture to say he won't complain of being frozen.

" PATROCLUS.

" Frita, run quick; bring wood and coals, and make the cauldron ready.

" FRITA.

"I promise him, if he has the gout or the itch, he will soon get rid of them."

St. John dies a perfect martyr, resigned to the boiling oil and gross jests of Patroclus and Longinus. One is astonished in the present times at the excessive absurdity and indeed blasphemy which the writers of these moralities permitted themselves, and, what is more extraordinary, were permitted by an audience consisting of a whole town. An extract from the "Mystery of Saint Dennis" is, in that rare book the "Bibliotheque du Theatre François depuis son origine. Dresde 1768."

The emperor Domitian, irritated against the Christians, persecutes them, and thus addresses one of his courtiers:—

" Seigneurs Romains, j'ai entendu	Roman lords, I understand
Que d'un crucifix, d'un pendu,	That of a crucified hanged man
On fait un Dieu par notre empire	They make a God in our kingdom,
Sans ce qu'on le nous daigne dire."	Without even deigning to ask our permission.

He then orders an officer to seize on Dennis in France. When this officer arrives at Paris the inhabitants acquaint him of the rapid and grotesque progress of this future Saint.

"Sire, il preche un Dieu a Paris	Sir, he preaches a God at Paris
Qui fait tous les mouls et les vauls.	Who has made mountain and valley.
Il va à cheval sans chevauls.	He goes a horseback without horses.
Il fait et defait tout ensemble.	He does and undoes at once.
Il vit, il meurt, il sue, il tremble.	He lives, he dies, he sweats, he trembles.
Il pleure, il vit, il veille, et dort.	He weeps, he laughs, he wakes and sleeps.
Il est jeune et vieux, foible et fort.	He is young and old, weak and strong
Il fait d'un coq une poulette.	He turns a cock into a hen.
Il jeue des arts de roulette,	He knows how to conjure with cup and ball,
Ou Je ne scais que ce peut etre."	Or I do not know who this can be.

Another of these admirers says, evidently alluding to the rite of baptism,—

"Sire, oyez que fait ce fol Prestre:	Sir, hear what this mad priest does:
Il prend de l'yaue en une escuele,	He takes water out of a ladle,
Et gete aux gens sur la cervele,	And, throwing it at people's heads,
Et dit que partant, sont sauvés!"	He says that when they depart, they are saved!

This piece then proceeds to entertain the spectators with the tortures of Saint Dennis, and at length, when more than dead, they mercifully

behead him:—the Saint after his decapitation, rises very quietly, takes his head under his arm, and walks off the stage in all the dignity of martyrdom.

It is justly observed by Bayle on these wretched representations, that while they prohibited the people from meditating on the sacred history in the book which contains it in all its purity and truth, they permitted them to see it on the theatre sullied with a thousand gross inventions, which were expressed in the most vulgar manner and in a farcical style. Warton, with his usual elegance, observes,—"To those who are accustomed to contemplate the great picture of human follies which the unpolished ages of Europe hold up to our view, it will not appear surprising that the people who were forbidden to read the events of the sacred history in the Bible, in which they are faithfully and beautifully related, should at the same time be permitted to see them represented on the stage disgraced with the grossest improprieties, corrupted with inventions and additions of the most ridiculous kind, sullied with impurities, and expressed in the language and gesticulations of the lowest farce." Elsewhere he philosophically observes, that, however, they had their use, "not only in teaching the great truths of scripture to men who could not read the bible,

but in abolishing the barbarous attachment to military games and the bloody contentions of the tournament, which had so long prevailed as the sole species of popular amusement. Rude, and even ridiculous as they were, they softened the manners of the people by diverting the public attention to spectacles in which the mind was concerned, and by creating a regard for other arts than those of bodily strength and savage valour."

"*Mysteries* are to be distinguished from *Moralities*, and *Farces*, and *Sotties*. *Moralities* are dialogues where the interlocutors represented feigned or allegorical personages. *Farces* were more exactly what their title indicates: obscene, gross, and dissolute representations, where both the actions and words are alike reprehensible.

The *Sotties* were more farcical than farce, and frequently had the licentiousness of pasquinades. I shall give an ingenious specimen of one of the MORALITIES. This morality is entitled "The Condemnation of Feasts, to the praise of Diet and Sobriety for the benefit of the human body."

The perils of gorging form the present subject. Towards the close is a trial between *Feasting* and *Supper*. They are summoned before *Experience*, the Lord Chief Justice! *Feasting* and *Supper* are accused of having murdered four persons by force of gorging them. *Expe-*

rience condemns *Feasting* to the gallows; and his executioner is *Diet*. *Feasting* asks for a father confessor, and makes a public confession of so many crimes, such numerous convulsions, apoplexies, head-aches, stomach-qualms, &c. which he has occasioned, that his executioner *Diet* in a rage stops his mouth, puts the cord about his neck, and strangles him. *Supper* is only condemned to carry in his hands a certain quantity of lead, to hinder him from putting too many dishes on table:—he is also bound over not to approach *Dinner* too near, and to be placed at the distance of six hours' walking under pain of death. *Supper* felicitates himself on his escape, and swears to observe with scrupulous exactness the mitigated sentence.

The MORALITIES were allegorical dramas, whose tediousness seems to have delighted a barbarous people not yet accustomed to perceive that what was obvious might be omitted to great advantage: like children, every thing must be told in such an age: their own unexercised imagination cannot supply any thing.—Hence it is that Bunyan is the poet of the people.

Of the FARCES the licentiousness is extreme, but their pleasantry and their humour are not contemptible. The "Village Lawyer," which is never exhibited on our stage without produ-

cing the broadest mirth, originates among these ancient drolleries. The humorous incident of the shepherd, who, having stolen his master's sheep, is advised by his lawyer only to reply to his judge by mimicking the bleating of a sheep, and when the lawyer in return claims his fee pays him by no other coin, is discovered in these ancient farces. Brueys got up the "*Patelin*" in 1702, and we borrowed this piece.

They had another species of drama still broader than Farce, and more strongly featured by the grossness, the severity, and personality of satire:—these were called *Sotties*, of which the following one I find in the Duke de la Valliere's "Bibliotheque du Theatre François."

The actors come on the stage with their fools'-caps each wanting the right ear, and begin with stringing satirical proverbs, till after drinking freely, they discover that their fools'-caps want the right ear. They call on their old grandmother *Sottie* (or Folly), who advises them to take up some trade. She introduces this progeny of her fools to the *World*, who takes them into his service. The *World* tries their skill, and is much displeased with their work. The *Cobler*-fool pinches his feet by making the shoes too small; the *Taylor*-fool hangs his coats too loose or too tight about him; the *Priest*-fool says his masses either too short or too tedious,

&c. They all agree that the *World* does not know what he wants, and must be sick, and prevail on him to get some advice from a Physician. The *World* obligingly sends what is required to an Urine-doctor, who instantly pronounces that "the *World* is as mad as a March hare!" He comes to visit his patient, and puts a great many questions on his unhappy state. The *World* replies, "that what most troubles his head is the idea of a new deluge by fire, which must one day consume him to a powder; on which the Physician gives this answer:—

"Et te troubles-tu pour cela?	And you really trouble yourself about this?
Monde, tu ne te troubles pas	Oh *World!* you do not trouble yourself about
De voir ce larrons attrapars	Seeing those impudent rascals
Vendre et acheter benefices;	Selling and buying livings;
Les enfans en bras des Nourrices	Children in the arms of their nurses
Estre Abbés, Eveques, Prieurs,	Made Abbots, Bishops, and Priors,
Chevaucher tres bien les deux soeurs,	Intriguing with girls,
Tuer les gens pour leurs plaisirs,	Killing people for their pleasures,
Jouer le leur, l'autrui saisir,	Minding their own interests, and seizing on what belongs to another,
Donner aux flatteurs audience,	Lending their ears to flatterers,

Faire la guerre à toute outrance	Making war, exterminating war,
Pour un rien entre les chrestiens!	For a bubble, among christians!

The *World* takes leave of his Physician, but retains his advice; and to cure his fits of melancholy gives himself up entirely to the direction of his fools. In a word, the *World* dresses himself in the coat and cap of *Folly*, and he becomes as gay and as ridiculous as the rest of the fools.

This *Sottie* was represented in the year 1524.

Such was the rage for Mysteries, that René d'Anjou, King of Naples and Sicily, and Count of Provence, had them represented with all possible magnificence, and made them a very serious occupation. Being in Provence, and having received letters from his son the Prince of Calabria, who asked him for an immediate aid of men, he replied, that he had a very different matter in hand, for he was fully employed in settling the order of a Mystery—*in honour of God.*

Mr. Strutt, in his "Manners and Customs of the English," has given a description of the stage in England when Mysteries were the only theatrical performances. Vol. iii. p. 130.

"In the early dawn of literature, and when the sacred Mysteries were the only theatrical

performances, what is now called the stage did then consist of three several platforms, or stages raised one above another. On the uppermost sat the *Pater Cœlestis*, surrounded with his Angels; on the second appeared the Holy Saints, and glorified men; and the last and lowest was occupied by mere men who had not yet passed from this transitory life to the regions of eternity. On one side of this lowest platform was the resemblance of a dark pitchy cavern from whence issued appearance of fire and flames; and when it was necessary, the audience were treated with hideous yellings and noises as imitative of the howlings and cries of the wretched souls tormented by the relentless demons. From this yawning cave the devils themselves constantly ascended to delight and to instruct the spectators:—to delight, because they were usually the greatest jesters and buffoons that then appeared; and to instruct, for that they treated the wretched mortals who were delivered to them with the utmost cruelty, warning thereby all men carefully to avoid the falling into the clutches of such hardened and remorseless spirits." An anecdote relating to an English Mystery, presents a curious specimen of the manners of our country which then could admit of such a representation; the simplicity, if not the libertinism of the age is great. A play was

acted in one of the principal cities of England, under the direction of the trading companies of that city, before a numerous assembly of both sexes, wherein *Adam* and *Eve* appeared on the stage entirely naked, performed their whole part in the representation of Eden, to the serpent's temptation, to the eating of the forbidden fruit, the perceiving of, and conversing about their nakedness, and to the supplying of fig-leaves to cover it." Mr. Warton observes they had the authority of scripture for such a representation, and they gave matters just as they found them in the third chapter of Genesis. Our following article will afford the reader a specimen of an *Elegant Morality.*

LOVE AND FOLLY, AN ANCIENT MORALITY.

ONE of the most elegant Moralities is composed by Louise L'Abé; the Aspasia of Lyons in 1550, adored by her cotemporaries. With no extraordinary beauty, she however displayed the fascination of classical learning, and a vein of vernacular poetry refined and fanciful. To accomplishments so various she added one very singular.—She distinguished herself by a military spirit, and was nicknamed Captain Louise. She was a fine rider and a fine lutanist. She presided in the assemblies of persons of litera-

ture and distinction: married to a manufacturer of cordage, she was called *La belle Cordiere*, and her name is still perpetuated by that of the street she lived in. Her anagram was *Belle à Soy*.—But she was *belle* also for others. Her *Morals* in one point were not correct, but her taste was never gross: to men of letters she was devoted. We have nothing now to blame of the perishable graces of a form, whose ashes may preserve it sacred from a just severity; but her productions, and the one particularly of which we give a curious analysis, are brilliant with genius.

It is a Morality entitled "Debat de Folie et d'Amour:—The contest of *Love* and *Folly*," divided into five parts and six personages. This division resembles our five acts, which, soon after the publication of this Morality, became generally practised.

In the first part, *Love* and *Folly* arrive at the same moment at the gate of Jupiter's palaces, to a festival to which he had invited the Gods. *Folly* observing *Love* just going to step in at the hall of the festival, pushes him away and enters in first. *Love* is enraged, but *Folly* insists on her precedency. *Love*, perceiving there was no reasoning with *Folly*, bends his bow and shoots an arrow; but she baffled his attempt by rendering herself invisible. She in her turn be-

comes furious, falls on the boy, tearing out his eyes, and then covers them with a bandage which could not be taken off.

In the second part, *Love*, in despair for having lost his sight, implores the assistance of his mother; she tries in vain to undo the magic fillet; the knots are never to be untied!

In the third part Venus, presents herself at the foot of the throne of Jupiter to complain of the outrage committed by *Folly* on her son. Jupiter commands *Folly* to appear.—She replies, that though she has reasons to justify herself, she will not venture to plead her cause, as she is apt to speak too much, or omit something material. She asks for a Counsellor. *Folly* chuses Mercury, and Apollo is selected by Venus. The fourth part consists of a long dissertation between Jupiter and *Love*, on the manner of loving. *Love* advises Jupiter, if he wishes to taste of truest happiness, to descend on earth, to lay down all his majesty and pomp; and, in the figure of a mere mortal, to seek to give pleasure to some beautiful maiden: "Then (cries he) thou wilt feel quite another contentment than that thou hast hitherto enjoyed: instead of a single pleasure it will be doubled; for there is as much pleasure to be kissed and to be loved, as to kiss and to love." Jupiter agrees that this may be true; but he thinks that to attain to this

it requires too much time, too much trouble, too many attentions,—and that after all it is not worth them.

In the fifth part, Apollo, the advocate for Venus, in a long pleading demands justice against *Folly*. The gods, seduced by his eloquence, shew by their indignation that they would condemn *Folly* without hearing her advocate Mercury. But Jupiter commands silence, and Mercury replies. His pleading is as long as the adverse party's, and his arguments in favour of *Folly* are so plausible, that when he concludes his address, the gods are divided in opinion, some espouse the cause of *Love*, and some that of *Folly*. Jupiter, after trying in vain to make them agree together, pronounces this award:—

"On account of the difficulty and importance of your disputes and the diversity of your opinions, we have suspended your contest from this day to three times seven times nine centuries. In the mean time we command you to live amicably together, without injuring one another. *Folly* shall lead *Love*, and take him whithersoever he pleases; and when restored to his sight (after consulting the fates) sentence shall be pronounced."

Many beautiful conceptions are scattered in this elegant morality. It has given birth to subsequent imitations; it was too original and

playful an idea not to be appropriated by the poets. To this morality we perhaps owe the panegyric of *Folly* by Erasmus, and the *Love* and *Folly* of la Fontaine.

RELIGIOUS NOUVELLETTES.

I SHALL notice a class of very singular works, in which the spirit of romance has been called in to render religion more attractive to certain heated imaginations.

In the fifteenth century was published a little book of *prayers*, accompanied by *figures*, both of a very uncommon nature for a religious publication. It offers too curious objects to pass over in silence. It is entitled *Hortulus Animæ cum Oratiunculis aliquibus superadditis quæ in prioribus Libris non habentur.*

It is a small octavo, printed in the Gothic character, by John Grunninger, 1500. It is a garden, says the author, which abounds with flowers for the pleasure of the soul; but Marchand tells us they are full of poison. In spite of his fine promises the chief part of these meditations are as puerile as they are superstitious. This we might excuse, because the ignorance and superstition of the times allowed such things; but the *figures* which accompany the work are to be condemned in all ages; one

represents Saint Ursula and some of her eleven thousand virgins, with all the licentious inventions of an Aretine. What strikes the ear does not so much irritate the senses, observes the sage Horace, as what is presented in all its nudity to the eye. One of these designs, is only ridiculous: David is represented as examining Bathsheba bathing, while Cupid hovering round him throws his dart, and with a malicious smile triumphs in his success: we have had many gross and strange designs like this. There is a laughable picture in a village in Holland, in which Abraham appears ready to sacrifice his son Isaac by a loaded blunderbuss; but his pious intention is entirely frustrated by an angel urining in the pan. Something similar is the design of another painting, in which the Virgin receives the annunciation of the angel Gabriel with a huge chaplet of beads tied round her waist, reading her own offices, and kneeling before a crucifix; or, like another happy invention to be seen on an altar-piece at Worms, in which the Virgin throws Jesus in the hopper of a mill, while from the other side he issues, changed into little morsels of bread with which the priests feast the people. Matthison, a recent traveller, describes a picture in a church at Constance, called the Conception of the holy Virgin. An old man lies on a cloud, whence he darts out a vast beam, which

passes through a dove hovering just below; at the end of a beam appears a large transparent egg, in which egg is seen a child in swaddling clothes with a glory round it. Mary sits leaning in an arm chair, and opens her mouth to receive the egg.

I must not pass unnoticed in this article a production as extravagant in its design, but libidinous to the extreme, as a work, in which the author prided himself on discussing three thousand questions concerning his favourite lady Mary.

The publication now adverted to was not presented to the world in a barbarous age and in a barbarous country, but printed at Paris in 1668. It bears for title, *Devote Salutation des Membres sacrés du Corps de la Glorieuse Vierge, Mere de Dieu.* That is, "A Devout Salutation of the Holy Members of the Body of the Glorious Virgin, Mother of God." It was printed and published with an approbation and privilege! This, I think, is more strange than the work itself. Valois reprobates it in these just terms: "What would Innocent XI. have done, after having abolished the shameful *Office of the Conception, Indulgences,* &c. if he had seen a volume in which the impertinent devotion of that visionary monk caused to be printed, with permission of his superiors, Meditations on all

the parts of the body of the holy Virgin? Religion, decency, and good sense, are they not alike wounded by such an extravagance?" This book has become so scarce, that I only know it by its description. In the Journal des Sçavans, for December 1703, I find a specimen of these *salutations*. They have preserved the most decent ones in which this fanatic salutes the *hair* and the *ears* of the holy Virgin.

SALUTATION TO THE HAIR.

"I salute you charming hair of Maria! Rays of the mystical sun! Lines of the centre and circumference of all created perfection! Veins of gold of the mine of love! Chains of the prison of God! Roots of the tree of life! Rivulets of the fountain of Paradise! Strings of the bow of charity! Nets that caught Jesus, and shall be used in the hunting-day of souls!"

SALUTATION TO THE EARS.

"I salute ye, intelligent ears of Maria! ye presidents of the princes of the poor! Tribunal for their petitions; salvation at the audience of the miserable! University of all divine wisdom! Receivers general of all wards! Ye are pierced with the rings of our chains; ye are impearled with our necessities!"

The images, prints, and miniatures, with which the catholic religion has occasion to decorate its splendid ceremonies, have frequently been consecrated to the purposes of love; they have been so many votive offerings worthy to have been suspended in the temple of Idalia. Pope Alexander VI. had the images of the virgin made to represent some of his mistresses; the famous Vanozza, his favourite, was placed on the altar of Santa Maria del Popolo; and Julia Farnese furnished a subject for another virgin. The same genius of pious gallantry also visited our country. The statuaries made the queen of Henry III. a model for the face of the Virgin Mary. Hearne elsewhere affirms, that the Virgin Mary was generally made to bear a resemblance to the queens of the age. This, no doubt, produced *real devotion*, in the courtiers.

The prayer-books of certain pious libertines were decorated with the portraits of their favourite minions and ladies in the characters of saints, and even of the Virgin and Jesus. This scandalous practice was particularly prevalent in that reign of debauchery in France, when Henry III. held the reins of government with a loose hand. In a missal once appertaining to the queen of Lewis XII. may be seen a mitred ape, giving its benediction to a man prostrate before it; a keen reproach to the clergy of that

day. Charles V. however pious that Emperor affected to be, had a missal painted for his mistress by the great Albert Durer, the borders of which are crowded with extravagant grotesques, consisting of apes, who were sometimes elegantly sportive, giving clysters to one another, and in many much more offensive attitudes, not adapted to heighten the piety of the Royal Mistress. This missal has two French verses written by the Emperor himself, who does not seem to have been ashamed of his present. The Italians carried this taste to excess; and I cannot but exult in recollecting that the manners of my countrymen were never tainted with this deplorable licentiousness. I know of no similar productions in England, even in its dark periods. I have, however, observed an innocent tendency towards it, by examining the illuminated manuscripts of the ancient metrical romances preserved in the British Museum. In these works, the curious observer may perceive that almost every heroine is represented in a state which appears incompatible with her reputation for chastity. Most of these works were originally, I believe, composed in France. Such moral blemishes, however, we forget, while we admire the vivid colouring of these splendid manuscripts.

A good supplement might be formed to religious indecencies from the Golden Legend,

which abounds in them. Stephens's Apology for Herodotus might be likewise consulted with effect for the same purpose. There is a story of St. Mary the Egyptian, who was, perhaps, more a lady of pleasure than Mary Magdalen, that not being able to pay for her passage to Jerusalem, whither she was going to adore the holy cross and sepulchre, she prostituted her person in lieu of payment. This anecdote presents the genuine character of certain *devotees;* and these female saints would have formed accomplished methodists.

Melchior Inchoffer, a jesuit, published a book to vindicate a miracle of a *Letter* which the Virgin Mary had addressed to the citizens of Messina; Naudé brought him positive proofs of its evident forgery; Inchoffer ingenuously confessed that he knew it was an imposture, but that he did it by the *orders* of his *superiors.*

This same *letter* of the Virgin Mary was something like a *donation* made to her by Louis the eleventh. He made a solemn donation of *the whole county* of Boulogne to the Holy Virgin—retaining, however, for *his own use the revenues!* This act bears the date of the year 1478, and it is thus entitled, "Conveyance of Louis the eleventh to the Virgin of Boulogne, of the right and title of the fief and homage of

the county of Boulogne, which is held by the Count of Saint Pol, to render a faithful account before the image of the said lady."

Maria Agreda, a religious visionary, wrote *the Life of the Virgin.* She informs us that she resisted the commands of God and the holy Mary till the year 1637, when she began to compose this curious rhapsody. When she had finished this *original* production, her confessor advised her to *burn* it; this she did. Her friends, however, who did not think her less inspired than she informed them she was, advised her to re-write the work. When it was printed, it spread rapidly from country to country: new editions appeared at Lisbon, Madrid, Perpignan, and Anvers. It was the rose of Sharon for those climates. There are so many pious absurdities in this book which were found to give such pleasure to the devout, that it was solemnly honoured with the Censure of the Sorbonne; so it spread the more!

The brain of this lady was certainly disordered with religion. In the first six chapters she relates the visions of the Virgin, which appeared to induce her to write her own life. She begins this history early enough; *ab ovo,* as it may be justly expressed; for she has formed a narrative of what passed during the nine months in which the Virgin was confined in the womb of her mo-

ther St. Anne. After the birth of Mary she received an augmentation of angelic Guards; gives us very accurately several conversations which God held with the Virgin, during the first eighteen months after her birth. And it is in this manner she formed *a circulating novel*, which delighted the female devotees of the Seventeenth Century.

The worship paid to the Virgin Mary in Spain and Italy, exceeds that which is given to the Son or the Father. When they pray to Mary, their imagination pictures a beautiful woman, they really feel a *passion*; while Jesus is only regarded as a *Bambino*, or Infant at the breast, and the *Father* is hardly ever recollected; but the *Madona*, *la Senhora*, *la Maria Santa*, while she inspires their religious inclinations, is a mistress to those who have none.

Of similar works it may be said there existed an entire race, and perhaps the libraries of the very curious may yet preserve a shelf of these delectable extravagances of dulness and fanaticism. The Jesuits were the usual authors of these rhapsodies. I find an account of a book which pretends to describe what passes in Paradise! A Spanish Jesuit published at Salamanca a volume in folio, 1652, entitled *Empyreologia*. He dwells with great complacency on the joys of the celestial abode. He says that there will

always be music in Heaven with material instruments as our ears are already accustomed to; otherwise he thinks the celestial music would not be music for us! But another Jesuit is more particular in his accounts. He positively assures us that we shall experience a supreme pleasure in kissing and embracing the bodies of the blessed; they will bathe in the presence of each other, and that for his purpose there are most agreeable baths in which we shall swim like fish; that we shall all warble as sweetly as larks and nightingales; that the angels will dress themselves in female habits, their hair curled; wearing petticoats and fardingales, and with the finest linen; that men and women will amuse themselves in masquerades, feasts, and balls.—Women will sing more agreeably than men to exalt these entertainments; and to finish, that at the resurrection they will have more luxuriant tresses, ornamented with ribbons and head-dresses as in this life!

Such were the books once so devoutly studied, and which doubtless were literally understood. How very bold must the minds of the Jesuits have been, and how very humble those of their readers, that such extravaganzas should ever be published! And yet, even to the time in which I am now writing,—even at this day,—the same

picturesque and impassioned pencil is employed by the modern Apostles of Mysticism—the Swedenburghians,—the Moravians,—the Methodists! Poor human NATURE, thou art condemned ever to be *one-eyed!*—One part of thy family must be *stone-blind*, and the other must see things *too clearly!*

I find an account of another book of this class, that is ridiculous enough to be noticed. It has for title, "The Spiritual Kalendar, composed of as many Madrigals or Sonnets and Epigrams as there are days in the year; written for the consolation of the pious and the curious. By father G. Cortade, Augustin Preacher at Bayonne, 1665." To give a notion of this singular collection take an Epigram addressed to a Jesuit, who, young as he was, used to *put spurs under his shirt* to mortify the outer-man! The Kalendar-poet thus gives a point to these spurs:

Il ne pourra done plus ni ruer ni hennir
Sous le rude Eperon dont tu fais son supplice?
Qui vit jamais tel artifice,
De piquer un cheval pour le mieux Retenir?

HUMBLY IMITATED.

Your body no more will neigh and will kick,
The point of the spur must eternally prick;
Whoever contrived a thing with such skill!
To keep spurring a horse, to make him stand still!

One of the most extravagant works projected on the subject of the Virgin Mary appears to be the following one. The prior of a convent in Paris had reiteratedly intreated Varillas, the historian, to examine a work composed by one of his Monks; and of which—not being himself addicted to letters—he wished to be governed by his opinion. Varillas at length yielded to the entreaties of the prior; and to regale the critic, they laid on two tables for his inspection seven enormous volumes in folio!

This rather disheartened our reviewer: but greater was his astonishment, when, having opened the first volume, he found its title to be *Summa Dei-paræ;* and as Saint Thomas had made a *Sum*, or System of Theology, so our Monk had formed a *System* of the *Virgin!* He immediately comprehended the design of our good father, who had laboured on this work full thirty years, and who boasted he had treated *Three Thousand* Questions concerning the Virgin; of which he flattered himself not a single one had ever yet been imagined by any one but himself!

Perhaps a more extraordinary design was never known. Varillas, pressed to give his judgment on this work, advised the prior, with great prudence and good-nature, to amuse the honest old Monk with the hope of printing

these seven folios, but always to start some new difficulties; for it would be inhuman to give so deep a chagrin to a man who had reached his 74th year, as to inform him of the nature of his favourite occupations; and that after his death, he should throw the volumes into the fire.

"CRITICAL SAGACITY," AND "HAPPY CONJECTURE;" OR, BENTLEY'S MILTON.

——BENTLEY, long to wrangling schools confin'd,
And but by books acquainted with mankind——
To MILTON lending sense, to HORACE wit,
He makes them write, what never poet writ.

MALLET.

Dr. BENTLEY'S edition of our English Homer is sufficiently known by name. As it stands a terrifying beacon to conjectural criticism, I shall just notice some of those violations which the learned critic ventured to commit with all the arrogance of a Scaliger. This man, so deeply versed in ancient learning, it will appear was destitute of taste and genius in his native language.

It was an unfortunate ingenuity in our critic, when, to persuade the world of the necessity of his edition, he imagined a fictitious editor of Milton's Poems: for it was this ingenuity which produced all his absurdities. As it is certain that the blind bard employed an amanuensis, it

was not improbable that many words of similar sound, but very different signification, might have disfigured the poem; but our Doctor was bold enough to conjecture that this amanuensis *interpolated* whole verses of his own composition in the "Paradise Lost!" Having said this, he has no doubt that the fact is incontrovertible. Yet is it not a far more probable conjecture that Milton, who was never careless of his future fame, had his poem *read* to him after it had been published? The first edition appeared in in 1667, the second in 1674, in which all the faults of the former edition are continued. By these *faults*, the Doctor means what *he* considers to be such: for we shall soon see that his "Canons of Criticism," are apocryphal.

Bentley says that he will *supply* the want of manuscripts to collate (to use his own words) by his own "SAGACITY," and "HAPPY CONJECTURE." Let us now judge how illimitable is the *Sagacity* and *happy Conjecture* of our erudite critic.

Milton, after the conclusion of Satan's speech to the fallen Angels, proceeds thus:

1. He spake: and to confirm his words out flew
2. Millions of flaming SWORDS, drawn from the thighs
3. Of mighty cherubim: the sudden blaze
4. Far round illumin'd hell; highly they rag'd
5. Against the Highest; and fierce with grasped ARMS

6. Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
7. Hurling defiance tow'rd the VAULT of Heaven.

In this passage which is as perfect (justly observes the Reviewer of this edition) as human wit can make, the Doctor alters three words. In the second line he puts *blades* instead of *swords*; in the fifth he puts *swords* instead of *arms*; and in the last line he prefers *walls* to *vault*. On this the Reviewer observes all these changes are so many defœdations of this poem. The word *swords* sounds much better in heroics than *blades*, which is mean both in sound and signification, and may as well be understood of *knives* as *swords*. The word *arms* is still stronger and more proper in this place than *swords*. The word *vault* is preferable to *walls*. *Vault* gives an idea of grandeur and majesty, as of some magnificent palace or stately building which is highly arched and vaulted; whereas *walls* are equally applicable to a little garden or lowest cottage as to the highest heaven.

Milton writes, book i. v. 63.

No light, but rather DARKNESS VISIBLE
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,

Perhaps borrowed from Spenser;

A little glooming light, much like a shade.
Faery Queen. B. i. C. i. St. 14.

This fine expression of "DARKNESS VISIBLE" the Doctor does not *clearly* understand; he substitutes in its place—

"No light, but rather A TRANSPICUOUS GLOOM."

Again our learned critic distinguishes the 74th line of the first book—

As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole,

as "a vicious verse," and therefore "sagaciously" gives an entire verse of his own composition—

"DISTANCE, WHICH TO EXPRESS ALL MEASURE FAILS."

Milton *writes*,

Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements.

B. ii. ver. 274.

Bentley CORRECTS,

"*Then*, AS WAS WELL OBSERV'D, our torments may
Become our elements."

To conclude with one more instance of critical emendation: Milton says, with an agreeable turn of expression—

So parted they; the angel up to heaven,
From the thick shade; and Adam to his bower.

Bentley "conjectures" these two verses to be inaccurate, and in lieu of the last writes—

"ADAM, TO RUMINATE ON PAST DISCOURSE."

He says, that after the conversation between the Angel and Adam in the bower, it may be well presumed that our first parent waited on his heavenly guest at his departure to some little distance from it, till he began to take his flight towards heaven; and therefore "sagaciously" thinks that the poet could not with propriety say that the Angel parted from the *thick shade*, that is, the *bower*, to go to heaven. But if Adam attended the Angel no farther than the door or entrance of the bower, then he shrewdly asks "How Adam could return to his bower if he was never out of it? This (says our Reviewer) must be allowed to be very curious and very profound! and of this kind are most of the remarks and criticisms in the Doctor's notes.

We are also informed that our editor has made above a thousand similar corrections in this edition of Milton. Some have suspected that the same kind intention which prompted Dryden to persuade Creech to undertake a translation of Horace, influenced those who encouraged our Doctor, in thus exercising his "sagacity" and "happy conjecture" on the epic of Milton. He

is one of those learned critics who have happily "elucidated their author into obscurity."

I have collected these few instances with the hope that they will not appear uninteresting to men of taste; they will convince us that one may be familiarised to Greek and Latin, though a stranger to one's mother tongue; and that a verbal critic may sometimes be successful in his attempts on a *single word*, though he may be incapable of tasting an *entire sentence*. Let it also remain as a gibbet on the high roads of literature; that "conjectural critics" as they pass may not forget the fate of Bentley.

The following Epigram appeared on this occasion:—

ON MILTON'S EXECUTIONER.

Did MILTON'S PROSE, O CHARLES! thy death defend?
A furious foe, unconscious, proves a friend;
On MILTON'S VERSE, does BENTLEY comment? know,
A weak officious friend becomes a foe.
While he would seem his author's fame to further,
The MURDEROUS CRITIC has aveng'd THY MURDER.

It is acknowledged, that the classical learning of Dr. Bentley was uncommon and acute. But profound erudition is frequently found not to be allied to the sensibility of taste and the ardour of genius.

A JANSENIST DICTIONARY.

L'Advocat published his concise Biographical Dictionary the Jansenists considered it as having been written with a view to depreciate the merit of *their* friends. It must be acknowledged there was little foundation for this complaint; but the spirit of party is soon alarmed. The Abbé Barral undertook a dictionary devoted to their cause. In this labour he indulged, assisted by his good friends the Jansenists, all the impetuosity and acerbity of a splenetic adversary. The Abbé was, however, an able writer; his anecdotes are numerous and well chosen; and his style is rapid and glowing. The work bears for title "Dictionnaire Historique, Litteraire, et Critique des Hommes Celèbres," 6 vols. 8vo. 1759. It is no unuseful speculation to observe in what manner a faction represents those who have not been its favourites: for this purpose I select the characters of Fenelon, Cranmer, and Luther.

In their article of FENELON they write,—"He composed for the instruction of the Dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, and Berry, several works, amongst others the Telemachus. A singular book which partakes at once of the character of a romance, and of a poem, and which substi-

tutes a prosaic cadence for versification. But several luscious pictures would not lead us to suspect that this book issued from the pen of a sacred minister for the education of a Prince; and what we are told by a famous poet is not improbable, that Fenelon did not compose it at Court, but that it is the fruits of his retreat in his diocese. And indeed the amours of Calypso and Eucharis should not be the first lessons that a minister should give his scholars; and besides, the fine moral maxims which the author attributes to the Pagan divinities are not well placed in their mouth. Is not this rendering homage to the Demons of the great truths which we receive from the Gospel, and to despoil J. C. to render respectable the annihilated gods of Paganism?—This prelate was a wretched divine, more familar with the light of profane authors than with that of the fathers of the church. Phelipeaux has given us in his narrative of "Quietism," the portrait of the friend of Madame Guyon." This Archbishop has a lively genius, artful, and supple, which can flatter and dissimulate if ever any could. Seduced by a woman, he was solicitous to spread his seduction. He joined to the politeness and elegance of conversation a modest air, which rendered him amiable. He spoke of spirituality with the expression and the enthusiasm of a prophet;

with such talents he flattered himself that every thing would yield to him.

In this work the Protestants, particularly the great reformers, find no quarter. What virulence runs in the following account of the well-known Thomas Cranmer; a man of the greatest simplicity of heart, and who, if he was a religious zealot, was never a religious persecutor! With what Catholic joy do they exult over his unhappy end!

"THOMAS CRANMER married the sister of Osiander. As Henry VIII. detested married priests, Cranmer kept this second marriage in profound secrecy. This action serves to shew the character of this great reformer, who is the hero of Burnet, whose history is so much esteemed in England. What blindness to suppose him an Athanasius who was at once a Lutheran secretly married, a consecrated Archbishop under the Roman Pontiff, whose power he detested, saying the mass in which he did not believe, and granting a power to say it! The Divine vengeance burst on this sycophantic courtier, who had always prostituted his conscience to his fortune."

I shall conclude these extracts with some parts of their character of Luther. It is true that Luther was himself a stranger to moderate strictures, which has already been shewn, but

the Jansenists are not inferior in their pious abuse.

"The furious LUTHER, perceiving himself assisted by the credit of several Princes, broke loose against the church with the most inveterate rage, and rung the most terrible alarm against the Pope. According to him we should have set fire to every thing, and reduced to one heap of ashes the Pope and the Princes who supported him. Nothing equals the rage of this phrenetic man, who was not satisfied with exhaling his fury in horrid declamations, but who was for putting all in practice. He raised his excesses to the height by inveighing against the vow of chastity, and in marrying publicly Chatherine De Bore, a nun, whom he enticed with eight others from their convents. He had prepared the minds of the people for this infamous proceeding by a treatise which he entitled "Examples of the Papistical Doctrine and Theology," in which he condemns the praises which all the Saints had given to continence. He died at length quietly enough, in 1546, at Isleben, his country-place:—God reserving the terrible effects of his vengeance to another life."

MANUSCRIPTS AND BOOKS.

IT would be no uninteresting literary specula-

tion to describe the difficulties which some of our most favourite works encountered in their manuscript state, and even after they had passed through the press. In a pamphlet written forty years ago, I have discovered an anecdote probably forgotten:—Sterne, when he had finished his first and second volume of Tristram Shandy, offered them to a bookseller at York for fifty pounds; but was refused. He came to town with his MSS. in his pocket; and he and Robert Dodsley agreed in a manner of which neither repented.

The Rosciad, with all its merit, lay for a considerable time in a dormant state, till Churchill and his publisher became impatient, and almost hopeless of success.—Burn's Justice was disposed of by its author, who was weary of soliciting booksellers to purchase the MS. for a trifle, and which now yields an annual income. Collins burnt his odes before the door of his publisher.—The publication of Dr. Blair's Sermons was refused by Strahan, and the "Essay on the Immutability of Truth," by Dr. Beattie, could find no publisher, and was printed by two friends of the author, at their joint expence; yet this work is the basis of Beattie's reputation as an author.

"The sermon in Tristram Shandy," (says Sterne, in his preface to his Sermons) "was

printed by itself some years ago, but could find neither purchasers nor readers." When it was inserted in his eccentric work, it met with a most favourable reception and occasioned the others to be collected.

Dr. J. Warton writes, "When Gray published his exquisite Ode on Eton College, his first publication, little notice was taken of it." The Polyeucte of Corneille, which is now accounted to be his master-piece, when he read it to the literary assembly held at the Hotel de Rambouillet, was not approved. Voiture came the next day, and in gentle terms acquainted him with the unfavourable opinion of the critics. Dr. Warton on this observes, such ill judges were then the most fashionable wits of France.

It was with great difficulty that Mrs. Centlivre could get her "Busy Body," performed. Wilks threw down his part with an oath of detestation.—Our comic authoress fell on her knees and wept.—Her tears, and not her wit, prevailed.

A pamphlet published in the year 1738, entitled, "A Letter to the Society of Booksellers, on the Method of forming a true Judgment of the Manuscripts of Authors," contains some curious literary intelligence, and is as follows:—

"We have known books, says our writer, that in the MS. have been damned as well as

others which seemed to be so, since, after their appearance in the world, they have often lain by neglected. Witness the "Paradise Lost" of the famous Milton, and the Optics of Sir Isaac Newton, which last, 'tis said, had no character or credit here till noticed in France. "The Historical Connection of the Old and New Testament," by Shuckford, is also reported to have been seldom enquired after for about a twelvemonth's time; however it made a shift, though not without some difficulty, to creep up to a second edition, and afterwards even to a third. And, which is another remarkable instance, the manuscript of Dr. Prideaux's "Connection," is well known to have been bandied about from hand to hand, among several, at least five or six of the most eminent booksellers, during the space of at least two years to no purpose, none of them undertaking to print that excellent work. It therefore lay in obscurity, till Archdeacon Echard, the author's friend, strongly recommended it to Tonson. It was purchased, and the publication was very successful. Robinson Crusoe's manuscript also ran through the whole trade, nor would any one print it, though the writer, De Foe, was in good repute as an author. One bookseller at last not remarkable for his discernment, but very much so for his speculative turn, engaged in this publication.

This bookseller got above a thousand guineas by it; and the booksellers are accumulating money every hour by editions of this work in all shapes. The undertaker of the translation of Rapin, after a very considerable part of the work had been published, was not a little dubious of its success, and was strongly inclined to drop the design. It proved at last to be a most profitable literary adventure." It is, perhaps, useful to record, that while the fine compositions of genius, and the elaborate labours of erudition are doomed to encounter these obstacles to fame, and never are but slightly remunerated, works of another description are rewarded in the most princely manner; at the recent sale of a bookseller, the copy-right of "Vyse's Spelling-book" was sold at the enormous price of £2,200; with an annuity of 50 guineas to the author!

THE TURKISH SPY.

WHATEVER may be the defects of the "Turkish Spy," the author has shewn one uncommon merit, by having opened a new species of composition, and which has been pursued by other writers with inferior success, if we except the charming "Persian Letters" of Montesquieu. The "Turkish Spy" is a book which

has delighted us in our childhood, and to which we can still recur with pleasure. But its ingenious author is unknown to three parts of his admirers.

In Mr. Boswell's "Life of Johnson," is this dialogue concerning the writer of the "Turkish Spy." "B. Pray, Sir, is the "Turkish Spy" a a genuine book? J. No, Sir. Mrs. Manley in her "Life" says, that *her Father wrote the two first volumes*;? and in another book—"Dunton's Life and Errours," we find that the rest was *written* by *one Sault*, at two guineas a sheet, under the direction of Dr. Midgeley." Vol. iii. p. 452.

I do not know on what authority Mrs. Manley advances that her father was the author; but this lady was never nice in detailing facts. Dunton, indeed, gives some information in a very loose manner. He tells us, p. 242, that it is probable, by reasons which he insinuates, that *one Bradshaw*, a hackney author, was the writer of the "Turkish Spy." This man probably was engaged by Dr. Midgeley to translate the volumes as they appeared at the rate of 40*s*. per sheet. On the whole, all this proves, at least, how little the author was known while the volumes were publishing, and that he is as little known at present by the extract from Mr. Boswell.

The ingenious writer of the Turkish Spy is John Paul Marana, an Italian; so that the Turkish Spy is just as real a personage as Cid Hamet, from whom Cervantes says he had his "History of Don Quixote." Marana had been imprisoned for a political conspiracy; after his release he retired to Monaco, where he wrote the "History of the Plot," which is said to be valuable for many curious particulars. Marana was at once a man of letters and of the world, and, what is superior, a man of genius. He had long wished to reside at Paris; in that assemblage of taste and luxury his talents procured him patrons. It was during his residence there that he produced his "Turkish Spy." By this ingenious contrivance he gave the history of the last age. He discovers a rich memory, and a lively imagination; but critics have said that he touches every thing, and penetrates nothing. His first three volumes greatly pleased: the rest are inferior. Plutarch, Seneca, and Pliny, were his favourite authors. He lived in a philosophical mediocrity; and in the last years of his life retired to his native country, where he died in 1693.

Charpentier gave the first particulars of this ingenious man. Even in his time the volumes were read as they came out, while its author remained unknown. Charpentier's proof of the

author is indisputable; for he preserved the following curious certificate, written in Marana's own hand-writing.

"I, the under-written John Paul Marana, author of a manuscript Italian volume, intituled, "*L'Esploratore Turco, tomo terzo,*" acknowledge that Mr. Charpentier, appointed by the Lord Chancellor to revise the said manuscript, has not granted me his certificate for printing the said manuscript, but on condition to rescind four passages. The first beginning, &c. By this I promise to suppress from the said manuscript the places above marked, so that there shall remain no vestige; since, without agreeing to this, the said certificate would not have been granted to me by the said Mr. Charpentier; and for surety of the above, which I acknowledge to be true, and which I promise punctually to execute, I have signed the present writing. Paris, 28th September, 1686.

JOHN PAUL MARANA."

This paper serves as a curious instance in what manner the censors of books clipped the wings of genius when it was found too daring or excursive.

These rescindings of the Censor appear to be marked by Marana in the printed work. We find more than once, chasms with these words:

"The beginning of *this* letter is wanting in the Italian translation; the *original* paper *being torn.*"

SPENSER, JONSON, AND SHAKSPEARE.

THE characters of these three great masters of English poetry are sketched by Fuller, in his "Worthies of England." It is a literary morsel that must not be passed by. The criticisms of those who lived in or near the times when authors flourished, merit our observation. They sometimes elicit a ray of intelligence, which later opinions do not always give.

He observes on SPENSER—"The many *Chaucerisms* used (for I will not say affected by him) are thought by the ignorant to be *blemishes*, known by the learned to be *beauties*, to his book; which, notwithstanding, had been more SALEABLE, if more conformed to our modern language."

On JONSON.—His parts were not so ready *to run of themselves*, as able to answer the spur; so that it may be truly said of him, that he had an *elaborate wit*, wrought out by his own industry.—He would *sit silent* in learned company, and suck in *(besides wine)* their several humours into his observation. What was *ore* in *others*, he was able to *refine* himself.

"He was paramount in the dramatic part of poetry, and taught the stage an exact conformity to the laws of comedians. His comedies were above the *Volge* (which are only tickled with downright obscenity), and took not so well at the *first stroke* as at the *rebound*, when beheld the second time; yea, they will endure reading so long as either ingenuity or learning are fashionable in our nation. If his latter be not so spriteful and vigorous as his first pieces, all that are old will, and all who desire to be old should, excuse him therein."

On SHAKSPEARE—"He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *poeta non fit, sed nascitur*; one is not made, but born a poet. Indeed his *learning* was but very little; so that as *Cornish diamonds* are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed and smoothed, even as they are taken out of the earth, so *Nature* itself was all the *art* which was used upon him.

"Many were the *wit-combats* betwixt him and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a *Spanish great galleon*, and an *English man of war*. Master *Jonson* (like the former) was built far higher in learning; *solid*, but *slow* in his performances. *Shakspeare*, with an English man of war, lesser in *bulk*, but lighter in *sailing*, could *turn with all tides*, and take advantage of *all winds*, by the quickness of his wit and invention."

Had these "Wit-combats," between Shakspeare and Jonson, which Fuller notices, been chronicled by some faithful *Boswell* of the age, our literary history would have received an interesting accession. A letter has been published by Dr. Berkenhout relating to an evening's conversation between our great rival bards, and Alleyn the actor. Peele, a dramatic poet, writes to his friend Marlow, another poet. The Doctor unfortunately in giving this copy, did not recollect his authority.

"FRIEND MARLOW,

"I never longed for thy companye more than last night: we were all very merrye at the Globe, where Ned Alleyn did not scruple to affirme pleasantly to thy friend WILL, that he had stolen his speeche about the qualityes of an actor's excellencye in Hamlet his Tragedye, from conversations manyfold which had passed between them, and opinyons given by Alleyn touchinge this subject. SHAKSPEARE did not take this talk in good sorte; but JONSON put an end to the strife, by wittylie remarking,—this affaire needeth no contention: you stole it from NED no doubt; do not marvel; have you not seen him act times out of number?"

This gives no unamiable picture of these conversations, which, however tradition has recorded, were not always of the same friendly cast.

BEN JONSON.

Ben Jonson, like most celebrated wits, was very unfortunate in conciliating the affections of his brother writers. He certainly possessed a great share of arrogance, and was desirous of ruling the realms of Parnassus with a despotic sceptre. That he was not always successful in his theatrical compositions, is evident from his abusing, in their title-page, the actors and the public. In this he has been imitated by Fielding. I have collected the following three satyric odes, written when the reception of his "*New-Inn*, or *The Light Heart*," warmly exasperated the irritable disposition of our poet.

He printed the title in the following manner: "*New-Inn*, or *The Light Heart*, a Comedy never acted, but most negligently played by some, the King's servants; and more squeamishly beheld and censured by others, the King's subjects, 1629. Now at last set at liberty to the readers, his Majesty's servants and subjects, to be judged, 1631."

At the end of this play he published the following Ode, in which he threatens to quit the stage for ever; and turn at once a Horace, an Anacreon, and a Pindar.

The just indignation the author took at the

vulgar censure of his play, begat this following Ode to himself:

"Come, leave the loathed stage,
And the more loathsome age;
Where pride and impudence (in fashion knit)
Usurp the chair of wit!
Inditing and arraigning every day
Something they call a play.
Let their fastidious, vaine
Commission of braine
Run on, and rage, sweat, censure, and condemn;
They were not made for thee,—less thou for them.

"Say that thou pour'st them wheat,
And they will acorns eat:
'T were simple fury, still, thyself to waste
On such as have no taste!
To offer them a surfet of pure bread,
Whose appetites are dead!
No, give them graines their fill
Husks, draff, to drink and swill.
If they love lees, and leave the lusty wine,
Envy them not their palate, with the swine.

"No doubt some mouldy tale
Like PERICLES*, and stale
As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish-
Scraps, out of every dish
Thrown forth, and rak't into the common-tub,
May keep up the play-club:
There sweepings do as well
As the best order'd meale.
For who the relish of these guests will fit,
Needs set them but the almes-basket of wit.

* This play, Langbaine says, is written by Shakspeare.

"And much good do't you then,
Brave plush and velvet men
Can feed on orts, and safe in your stage clothes,
Dare quit, upon your oathes,
The stagers, and the stage-wrights too (your peers),
Of larding your large ears
With their foul comic socks,
Wrought upon twenty blocks:
Which, if they're torn, and turn'd, and patch'd enough,
The gamesters share your guilt, and you their stuff.

"Leave things so prostitute,
And take the Alcæick lute,
Or thine own Horace, or Anacreon's lyre;
Warm thee by Pindar's fire;
And, tho' thy nerves be shrunk, and blood be cold,
Ere years have made thee old,
Strike that disdainful heat
Throughout, to their defeat;
As curious fools, and envious of thy strain,
May, blushing, swear no palsy's in thy brain *.

"But when they hear thee sing
The glories of thy King,
His zeal to God, and his just awe o'er men;
They may blood-shaken then,
Feel such a flesh-quake to possess their powers,
As they shall cry like ours
In sound of peace, or wars,
No harp ere hit the stars,
In tuning forth the acts of his sweet raign,
And raising Charles his chariot 'bove his wain,

This Magisterial Ode, as Langbaine calls it, was answered by *Owen Feltham*, author of the

* He had the palsy at that time.

"Resolves," who has written with great satiric acerbity the retort courteous. His character of this poet should be attended to:—

"An Answer to the Ode, Come leave the loathed Stage, &c."

"Come leave this sawcy way
Of baiting those that pay
Dear for the sight of your declining wit:
'Tis known it is not fit
That a sale poet, just contempt once thrown,
Should cry up thus his own.
I wonder by what dower,
Or patent, you had power
From all to rape a judgment. Let 't suffice,
Had you been modest, y' ad been granted wise.

"'Tis known you can do well,
And that you do excell
As a translator; but when things require
A genius, and fire,
Not kindled heretofore by other pains,
As oft y' ave wanted brains
And art to strike the white,
As you have levell'd right:
Yet if men vouch not things apocryphal,
You bellow, rave, and spatter round your gall.

"Jug, Pierce, Peek, Fly*, and all
Your jests so nominal,
Are things so far beneath an able brain,
As they do throw a stain
Thro' all th' unlikely plot, and do displease
As deep as Pericles.

* The names of several of Jonson's Dramatis Personæ.

Where yet there is not laid
Before a chamber-maid
Discourse so weigh'd *, as might have serv'd of old
For schools, when they of love and valour told.

"Why rage, then? when the show
Should judgment be, and know- †
ledge, there are plush who scorn to drudge
For stages, yet can judge
Not only poets looser lines, but wits,
And all their perquisits;
A gift as rich as high
Is noble poesie:
Yet, tho' in sport it be for Kings a play,
'Tis next mechanicks' when it works for pay.

"Alcæus lute had none,
Nor loose Anacreon
E'er taught so bold assuming of the bays
When they deserv'd no praise.
To rail men into approbation
Is new to your's alone;
And prospers not: for know,
Fame is as coy, as you
Can be disdainful; and who dares to prove
A rape on her shall gather scorn,—not love.

"Leave, then, this humour vain,
And this more humorous strain,
Where self-conceit, and choler of the blood,
Eclipse what else is good:
Then, if you please those raptures high to tou
Whereof you boast so much:

* "New Inn," Act iii. Scene 2.—Act iv. Scene 4.

† This break was purposely designed by the poet, to expose that awkward one in Ben's third stanza.

And but forbear your crown
Till the world puts it on:
No doubt, from all you may amazement draw,
Since braver theme no Phœbus ever saw."

To console dejected Ben for this just reprimand, Randolph, one of the adopted poetical sons of Jonson, addressed him with all that warmth of grateful affection which a man of genius should have felt on the occasion.

"An Answer to Mr. Ben Jonson's Ode, to persuade him not to leave the Stage.

I.

"Ben, do not leave the stage
'Cause 'tis a loathsome age;
For pride and impudence will grow too bold,
When they shall hear it told
They frighted thee: 'Stand high, as is thy cause;
Their hiss is thy applause:'
More just were thy disdain,
Had they approv'd thy vein:
So thou for them, and they for thee were born;
They to incense, and thou as much to scorn.

"Will't thou engross thy store
Of wheat, and pour no more,
Because their bacon-brains had such a taste
As more delight in mast?
No! set them forth a board of dainties, full
As thy best muse can cull;

Whilst they the while do pine
And thirst, midst all their wine.
What greater plague can hell itself devise,
Than to be willing thus to tantalize!

III.

"'Thou canst not find them stuff,
That will be bad enough
To please their pallates: let 'em them refuse,
For some pye-corner muse;
She is too fair an hostess, 'twere a sin
For them to like thine Inn:
'T was made to entertain
Guests of a nobler strain;
Yet, if they will have any of the store,
Give them some scraps, and send them from thy dore.

IV.

"And let those things in plush
Till they be taught to blush,
Like what they will, and more contented be
With what Broom * swept from thee.
I know thy worth, and that thy lofty strains
Write not to cloaths, but brains:
But thy great spleen doth rise,
'Cause moles will have no eyes:
This only in my Ben I faulty find,
He's angry, they 'll not see him that are blind.

* His man, Richard Broome, wrote with success several comedies. He had been the amanuensis or attendant of Jonson. The epigram made against Pope for the assistance W. Broome gave him, appears to have been borrowed from this pun. Johnson has inserted it in "Broome's Life."

V.

" Why shou'd the scene be mute
'Cause thou canst touch the lute
And string thy Horace? Let each muse of nine
Claim thee, and say, th' art mine.
'T were fond, to let all other flames expire,
To sit by Pindar's fire:
For by so strange neglect
I should myself suspect
Thy palsie * were as well thy brain's disease,
If they could shake thy muse which way they please.

VI.

" And tho' thou well canst sing
The glories of thy King,
And on the wings of verse his chariot bear
To heaven, and fix it there;
Yet let thy muse as well some raptures raise
To please him, as to praise.
I would not have thee chuse
Only a treble muse;
But have this envious, ignorant age to know,
Thou that canst sing so high, canst reach as low."

ARIOSTO AND TASSO.

I CONCEIVE the first to display an original, an extravagant, but a delightful genius: the other a regular, classical, and beautiful taste;—but it surprises one to find among the literary Italians his merits most keenly disputed: slaves to clas-

* He had the palsy at that time.

sical authority they bend down to the majestic regularity of Tasso. Yet the father of Tasso, before his son had rivalled the romantic Ariosto, describes in a letter the effects of the "Orlando" on the people :—"There is no man of learning, no mechanic, no lad, no girl, no old man, who are satisfied to read the "Orlando Furioso" once. This poem serves as the solace of the traveller, who fatigued in his travels, deceives his lassitude by chaunting some octaves of this poem. You may hear them sing these stanzas in the streets and in the fields every day, and by every one!" One would have expected that Ariosto would have been the favourite of the people, and Tasso, of the critics. I am assured by a native, that in Venice it is very common to hear the gondoliers, and others sing passages which are generally taken from Tasso, and rarely from Ariosto. A different fate, I imagined, would have attended the poet who has been distinguished by the epithet of "*The Divine.*" I have been told by an Italian man of letters, that this circumstance arises from the relation which Tasso's poem bears to Turkish affairs; as many of the common people have passed into Turkey, either through chance or war. Besides that the long antipathy existing between the Venetians and the Turks, gives additional force to the patriotic poetry of Tasso. We can-

not boast of any similar poems. Thus it was that the people of Greece and Ionia sung the poems of Homer.

The Academia della Crusca gave a public preference to Ariosto. This, as was natural to suppose, irritated certain critics, and none more than Chapelain, who could *taste* the regularity of Tasso, but not *feel* the "brave disorder" of Ariosto. He could not approve of those writers,

"Who snatch a Grace beyond the reach of Art."

On this occasion he writes to a friend, "I thank you for the sonnet which your indignation dictated, at the Academy's preference of Ariosto to Tasso. This judgment is overthrown by the confessions of many of the *Cruscanti*, my associates. It would be tedious to enter into its discussion; but it was passion and not equity that prompted that decision. We confess, that as to what concerns invention and purity of language, Ariosto has eminently the advantage over Tasso; but majesty, pomp, numbers, and a style truly sublime, united to regularity of design, raise the latter so much above the other that no comparison can fairly exist."

What Chapelain says is perhaps just; though I did not know that Ariosto's language was purer than Tasso's. The opinion of this critic, however, would not be more regarded here than

it was by the Academy. Ariosto is the *Shakspeare* of Italy; Tasso may be said to be the *Gray*. Shakspeare delights all, though he must occasionally offend a correct taste: Gray can only be relished by the select few, who are admitted to the secret councils of the Muses.

It is the conceit of an Italian to give the name of *April* to *Ariosto*, because it is the season of *flowers*; and that of *September* to *Tasso*, which is that of *fruits*. Tiraboschi judiciously observes, that no comparison ought to be made between these great rivals. It is comparing the "Ovid's Metamorphoses" with "Virgil's Æneid;" they are quite different things. His characters of the two poets are composed with infinite taste; and he distinguishes between a romantic poem and a regular epic. They both have perfected their designs, but these are different.

Boileau, some time before his death, was asked by a critic, if he had repented of his celebrated decision concerning the merits of Tasso, whom some Italians had compared with those of Virgil; this had awakened the vengeance of Boileau, who hurled his bolts at the violators of classical majesty. It is supposed that he was ignorant of the Italian language; no positive marks of his knowledge can be traced in his works; I find one or two quotations, but when

an author quotes from another language it does not prove his knowledge of that language. By some expressions used by Boileau in the following answer, which he made to the critic, one may be led to think he was not ignorant of the Italian.

"I have (he answered) so little changed my opinion, that in a *re-perusal* lately of Tasso, I was sorry that I had not more amply explained myself on this subject in some of my reflections on "Longinus." I should have begun by acknowledging that Tasso had a sublime genius, of great compass, with happy dispositions for the higher poetry. But when I came to the use he made of his talents, I should have shewn that judicious discernment rarely prevailed in his works. That in the greater part of his narrations, he attached himself to the agreeable oftener than to the just. That his descriptions are almost always overcharged with superfluous ornaments. That in painting the strongest passions, and in the midst of the agitation they excite, frequently he degenerates into witticisms, which abruptly destroy the pathetic. That he abounds with images of too florid a kind; affected turns; conceits and frivolous thoughts; which, far from being adapted to his Jerusalem, could hardly be supportable in his "Aminta." So that all this, opposed to the gravity, the so-

briety, the majesty of Virgil, what is it but tinsel compared with gold?"

It must be acknowledged that this passage, which is to be found in the "Histoire de l'Academie, t. ii. p. 276, may serve as an excellent commentary on our poet's well-known censure. The merits of Tasso are exactly discriminated; and this particular criticism must be valuable to the lovers of poetry.

An anonymous gentleman has greatly obliged me with an account of the recitation of these two poets, by the gondoliers of Venice, extracted from his travelling pocket-book.

VENICE.

In Venice the gondoliers know by heart long passages from Ariosto and Tasso, and often chaunt them with a peculiar melody. But this talent seems at present on the decline:—at least, after taking some pains, I could find no more than two persons who delivered to me in this way a passage from Tasso. I must add, that the late Mr. Barry once chaunted to me a passage in Tasso in the manner, as he assured me, of the Gondoliers.

There are always two concerned, who alternately sing the strophes. We know the melody eventually by Rousseau, to whose songs it is

printed; it has properly no melodious movement, and is a sort of medium between the canto fermo and the canto figurato; it approaches to the former by recitativical declamation, and to the latter by passages and course, by which one syllable is detained and embellished.

I entered a gondola by moonlight; one singer placed himself forwards, and the other aft, and thus proceeded to St. Georgio. One began the song: when he had ended his strophe the other took up the lay, and so continued the song alternately. Throughout the whole of it, the same notes invariably returned, but, according to the subject matter of the strophe, they laid a greater or a smaller stress, sometimes on one, and sometimes on another note, and indeed changed the enunciation of the whole strophe, as the object of the poem altered.

On the whole, however, their sounds were hoarse and screaming: they seemed, in the manner of all rude uncivilized men, to make the excellency of their singing in the force of their voice: one seemed desirous of conquering the other by the strength of his lungs, and so far from receiving delight from this scene (shut up as I was in the box of the gondola), I found myself in a very unpleasant situation.

My companion, to whom I communicated this

circumstance, being very desirous to keep up the credit of his countrymen, assured me that this singing was very delightful when heard at a distance. Accordingly we got out upon the shore, leaving one of the singers in the gondola, while the other went to the distance of some hundred paces. They now began to sing against one another, and I kept walking up and down between them both, so as always to leave him who was to begin his part. I frequently stood still and hearkened to the one and to the other.

Here the scene was properly introduced. The strong declamatory, and, as it were, shrieking sound, met the ear from far, and called forth the attention; the quickly succeeding transitions, which necessarily required to be sung in a lower tone, seemed like plaintive strains succeeding the vociferations of emotion or of pain. The other, who listened attentively, immediately began where the former left off, answering him in milder or more vehement notes, according as the purport of the strophe required. The sleepy canals, the lofty buildings, the splendour of the moon, the deep shadows of the few gondolas that moved like spirits hither and thither, increased the striking peculiarity of the scene, and amidst all these circumstances it was easy to confess the character of this wonderful harmony.

It suits perfectly well with an idle solitary mariner, lying at length in his vessel at rest on one of these canals, waiting for his company, or for a fare, the tiresomeness of which situation is somewhat alleviated by the songs and poetical stories he has in memory. He often raises his voice as loud as he can, which extends itself to a vast distance over the tranquil mirror, and as all is still around, he is as it were in a solitude in the midst of a large and populous town. Here is no rattling of carriages, no noise of foot passengers: a silent gondola glides now and then by him, of which the splashing of the oars are scarcely to be heard.

At a distance he hears another, perhaps utterly unknown to him. Melody and verse immediately attach the two strangers; he becomes the responsive echo to the former, and exerts himself to be heard as he had heard the other. By a tacit convention they alternate verse for verse; though the song should last the whole night through, they entertain themselves without fatigue; the hearers, who are passing between the two, take part in the amusement.

This vocal performance sounds best at a great distance, and is then inexpressibly charming, as it only fulfils its design in the sentiment of remoteness. It is plaintive, but not dismal in its sound, and at times it is scarcely possible to re-

frain from tears. My companion, who otherwise was not a very delicately organized person, said quite unexpectedly: e singolare come quel canto intenerisce, e molto più quando lo cantano meglio.

I was told that the women of Libo, the long row of islands that divides the Adriatic from the Lagouns, particularly the women of the extreme districts of Malamocca and Palestrina, sing in like manner the works of Tasso to these and similar tunes.

They have the custom, when their husbands are fishing out at sea, to sit along the shore in the evenings and vociferate these songs, and continue to do so with great violence, till each of them can distinguish the responses of her own husband at a distance.

How much more delightful and more appropriate does this song shew itself here, than the call of a solitary person uttered far and wide, till another equally disposed shall hear and answer him! It is the expression of a vehement and hearty longing, which yet is every moment nearer to the happiness of satisfaction.

BAYLE.

Few philosophers were more deserving of the title than Bayle. His last hour exhibits the

Socratic intrepidity with which he encountered the formidable approach of death. On the evening preceding his decease, he wrote till midnight. In the morning when the printer came for a proof, he still retained sufficient presence of mind to point to where it laid; yet then was death fixed on his countenance, and his throat rattled: his dissolution was rapidly taking place. The affrighted printer ran out for assistance; no servant was found; and when at length they came to the bed of Bayle, the philosopher was no more!

The irritability of genius is forcibly characterised by this circumstance in his literary life. When a close friendship had united him to Jurieu, he lavished on him the most flattering eulogiums. He was the hero of his "Republic of Letters." Enmity succeeded to friendship; Jurieu is then continually quoted in his "Critical Dictionary," whenever an occasion offers to give instances of gross blunders, palpable contradictions, and inconclusive arguments. This inequality of sentiment and inconsistent malignity may be sanctioned by the similar conduct of a *Saint!* Racine tells us, that St. Jerome praised Rufinus as the most learned man of his age, while his friend; but when the same Rufinus joined his adversary Origen, he called him one of the most ignorant!

As a logician he had no superior; the best logician will, however, frequently deceive himself. Bayle (observes D'Artigny) made long and close arguments to shew that La Motte le Vayer never could have been a preceptor to the king. But all his reasonings are overturned by the fact being given in the history of the Academy, by Pelisson.

Basnage said of Bayle, that *he read much by his fingers.* He meant that he ran over book more than he read it; and that he had the art of always falling upon that which was most essential and curious in the book he examined.

There are heavy hours in which the mind of a man of letters is unhinged; when the intellectual faculties lose all their elasticity, and when nothing but the simplest actions are adapted to their enfeebled state. At such hours it is recorded of the Jewish Socrates, Moses Mendelsohn, that he would stand at his window, and count the tiles of his neighbour's house. An anonymous writer has told of Bayle, that he would frequently wrap himself in his cloak, and hasten to places where mountebanks resorted; and that this was one of his chief amusements. He is surprized that so great a philosopher should delight in so trifling an object. This observation is not injurious to the character of Bayle, it only proves that the writer himself was no philosopher.

The Monthly Reviewer, in noticing this article, has continued the speculation, by giving two interesting anecdotes. He writes, 'The observation concerning 'heavy hours,' and the want of elasticity in the intellectual faculties of men of letters, when the mind is fatigued, and the attention blunted by incessant labour, reminds us of what is related by persons who were acquainted with the late sagacious magistrate Sir John Fielding; who, when fatigued with attending to complicated cases, and perplexed with discordant depositions, used to retire to a little closet in a remote and tranquil part of the house, to rest his mental powers, and sharpen perception. He told a great physician, now living, who complained of the distance of places, as caused by the great extension of London, that 'he (the physician) would not have been able to visit so many patients to any purpose, if they had resided nearer to each other; as he could have had no time either to think, or to rest his mind."

In the short journal of Bayle's Life, preserved by Maiseaux, I observe this curious entry. "1669. March 10, I changed my religion. Next day I resumed the study of Logic."—Should he not have completed his course of Logic before he changed his religion?

Our excellent logician was little accustomed to polished society; his life was passed in study.

He had so much simplicity in his nature, that he would speak on anatomical subjects before the ladies with as much freedom as before surgeons. When they inclined their eyes to the ground, and while some even blushed, he would then inquire if what he spoke was indecent; and when they told him so, he smiled and stopped. His habits of life were, however, extremely pure; he probably left himself little leisure "*to fall into temptation.*"

Bayle knew nothing of geometry, and as Le Clerc informs us, acknowledged that he could never comprehend the demonstration of the first problem in Euclid. Le Clerc, however, was a rival to Bayle; with greater industry and more accurate learning, but with very inferior powers of reasoning and philosophy. Both of these great scholars, like our Locke, were destitute of fine taste, and poetical discernment.

When Fagon, an eminent physician, was consulted on the illness of our student, he only prescribed a particular regimen, without the use of medicine. He closed his consultation by a compliment remarkable for its felicity. 'I ardently wish one could spare this great man all this constraint, and that it were possible to find a remedy as singular, as the merit of him for whom it is asked.'

Voltaire has said that Bayle confessed he

would not have made his Dictionary exceed a folio volume, had he written only for himself and not for the booksellers. This Dictionary, with all its human faults, is a stupendous work, which must last with literature itself.

His other productions have claims on our attention: is it possible to read his "*Thoughts on Comets*," and complain of lassitude? His "*Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*," are a model of periodical criticism, lively, neat, and full of that attic salt which gives a piquancy to the disquisitions of criticism. The mind of Bayle is always acute; but, what is still more engaging, it communicates entertainment. His sceptre of criticism is embellished by flowers.

CERVANTES.

Every trifling information concerning a great man, to his admirers ceases to be such. I find in the Segraisiana, p. 83, this authentic anecdote concerning the inimitable Cervantes.

Mr. du Boulay accompanied the French ambassador to Spain, when Cervantes was yet alive. He has told me, that the ambassador one day complimented Cervantes on the great reputation he had acquired by his Don Quixote; and that Cervantes whispered in his ear, 'Had it not been for the Inquisition, I should have made my book much more entertaining.

Cervantes, at the battle of Lepanto, was wounded and enslaved. He has given his own history in Don Quixote. He was known at the court of Spain, but he did not receive those favours which might have been expected; he was neglected—His first volume is the finest; and his design was to have finished there; but he could not resist the importunities of his friends, who engaged him to make a second, which does not display the same force, although it has many splendid passages.

We have lost many good things of Cervantes, and other writers, because of the tribunal of religion and dulness. One Aonius Palearius was sensible of this; and said, 'that the Inquisition was a poignard aimed at the throat of literature.' The image is striking, and the observation just; but the ingenious observer was in consequence immediately *burnt!*

MAGLIABECHI.

Anthony Magliabechi, who died at the age of eighty, was celebrated for his great knowledge of books. He has been called the *Hellua*, or the Glutton of Literature, as Peter *Comestor* received this nick-name from his amazing voracity for food he could never digest; which appeared,

when having fallen sick of so much false learning, he threw it all up in his "*Sea of Histories*," which proved to be the history of all things, and a bad history of every thing. Magliabechi's character is singular; for though his life was wholly passed in libraries, being librarian to the Duke of Tuscany, he never *wrote* himself. There is a medal which represents him sitting, with a book in one hand, and with a great number of books scattered on the ground. The candid inscription signifies, that it is not sufficient to become learned to have read much, if we read without reflection. This is the only remains we have of his own composition that can be of service to posterity. A simple truth, indeed, but one, that should be inscribed in the study of every man of letters.

His habits of life were uniform. Ever among his books, he troubled himself with no other concern whatever; and the only interest he appeared to take for any living thing was his spiders; for whom, while sitting among his literary piles, he affected great sympathy, and contemptuously, perhaps, to those whose curiosity appeared impertinent, he frequently cried out, to "take care not to hurt his spiders!" Although he lost no time in writing himself, he gave considerable assistance to authors who consulted him. He was himself an universal index

to all authors. He had one book, among many others, dedicated to him, and this dedication consisted of a collection of titles of works which he had had at different times dedicated to him, with all the eulogiums addressed to him in prose and verse. When he died, he left his vast collection of books for the public use; they now compose the public library of Florence.

Heyman, a celebrated Dutch professor, visited this erudite librarian, who was considered as the ornament of Florence. He found him amongst his books, of which the number was prodigious. Two or three rooms in the first story were crowded with them, not only along their sides, but piled in heaps on the floor; so that it was difficult to sit, and more so to walk. A narrow space was contrived, indeed, so that by walking sideways, you might extricate yourself from one room to another. This was not all; the passage below stairs was full of books, and the staircase from the top to the bottom was lined with them. When you reached the second story, you saw with astonishment three rooms, similar to those below, equally full; so crowded that two good beds in these chambers were also crammed with books.

This apparent confusion did not, however, hinder Magliabechi from immediately finding the books he wanted. He knew them all so

well, that even to the least of them it was sufficient to see its outside, to say what it was; and indeed he read them day and night, and never lost sight of any. He eat on his books, he slept on his books, and quitted them as rarely as possible. During his whole life he only went twice from Florence; once to see Fiesoli, which is not above two leagues distant, and once ten miles further by order of the Grand Duke. Nothing could be more simple than his mode of life; a few eggs, a little bread, and some water, were his ordinary food. A drawer of his desk being open, Mr. Heyman saw there several eggs, and some money, which Magliabechi had placed there for his daily use. But as this drawer was generally open, it frequently happened that the servants of his friends, or strangers who came to see him, pilfered some of these things; the money or the eggs.

His dress was as cynical as his repasts. A black doublet, which descended to his knees; large and long breeches; an old patched black cloak; an amorphous hat, very much worn, and the edges ragged; a large neckcloth of coarse cloth, begrimed with snuff; a dirty shirt, which he always wore as long as it lasted, and which the broken elbows of his doublet did not conceal; and, to finish this inventory, a pair of ruffles which did not belong to the shirt. Such

was the brilliant dress of our learned Florentine; and in such did he appear in the public streets, as well as in his own house. Let me not forget another circumstance; to warm his hands, he generally had a stove with fire fastened to his arms; so that his clothes were generally singed and burnt, and his hands scorched. He had nothing otherwise remarkable about him. To literary men he was extremely affable, and a cynic only to the eye; anecdotes almost incredible are related of his memory. It is somewhat uncommon that as he was so fond of literary *food*, he did not occasionally dress some dishes of his own invention, or at least to his own relish. He indeed should have written CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE. He was a living Cyclopedia, though a dark lantern.

Of such reading-men, Hobbes entertained a very contemptible, if not a rash opinion. His own reading was inconsiderable, and he used to say, that if he had spent as much time in *reading* as other men of learning, he should have been as *ignorant* as they. He put little value on a *large library*, for he considered all *books* to be merely *extracts* and *copies*, for that most authors were like sheep, never deviating from the beaten path. History he treated lightly, and thought there were more lies than truths in it. But let us carry with us after all this, that Hobbes was

a mere metaphysician, idolizing his own vain and empty hypothesis. It is true enough that weak heads carrying in them too much reading may be staggered. Le Clerc observes of two learned men, De Marcilly and Bartius, that they would have composed more useful works had they *read* less numerous authors, and digested the better writers.

ABRIDGERS.

The present article presents the history of Abridgers; a kind of literary men to whom the indolence of modern readers, and indeed the multiplicity of authors, gives ample employment.

It would be difficult, observe the learned Benedictines, the authors of the Literary History of France, to relate all the unhappy consequences which ignorance introduced, and the causes which produced that ignorance. But we must not forget to place in this number the mode of reducing, by way of abridgment, what the ancients had written in bulky volumes. Examples of this practice may be observed in preceding centuries, but in the fifth century it began to be in general use. As the number of students and readers diminished, authors neglected literature, and were disgusted with composition; for to write is seldom done, but when

the writer entertains the hope of finding readers. Instead of original authors, there suddenly arose numbers of Abridgers. These men, amidst the prevailing disgust for literature, imagined they should gratify the public by introducing a mode of reading works in a few hours, which otherwise could not be done in many months; and, observing that the bulky volumes of the ancients lay buried in dust, without any one condescending to examine them, necessity inspired them with an invention that might bring those works and themselves into public notice, by the care they took of renovating them. This they imagined to effect by forming abridgments of these ponderous volumes.

All these Abridgers, however, did not follow the same mode. Some contented themselves with making a mere abridgment of their authors, by employing their own expressions, or by inconsiderable alterations. Others formed abridgments in drawing them from various authors, but from whose works they only took what appeared to them most worthy of observation, and embellished them in their own style. Others again, having before them several authors who wrote on the same subject, took passages from each, united them, and thus formed a new work; they executed their design by digesting in common-places, and under various titles, the

most valuable parts they could collect, from the best authors they read. To these last ingenious scholars we owe the rescue of many valuable fragments of antiquity. They fortunately preserved the best maxims, characters, descriptions, and curious matters which they had found interesting in their studies.

Some learned men have censured these abridgers as the cause of our having lost so many excellent entire works of the ancients; for posterity becoming less studious was satisfied with these extracts, and neglected to preserve the originals, whose voluminous size was less attractive. Others, on the contrary, say that these Abridgers have not been so prejudicial to literature; and that had it not been for their care, which snatched many a perishable fragment from that shipwreck of letters which the barbarians occasioned, we should perhaps have had no works of the ancients remaining. Many voluminous works have been greatly improved by their abridgers. The vast history of Trogus Pompeius was soon forgotten and finally perished, after the excellent epitome of it by Justin, who winnowed the abundant chaff from the grain.

Bayle gives very excellent advice to an Abridger, when he shews that Xiphilin, in his Abridgment of Dion, taks no notice of a cir-

cumstance very material for entering into the character of Domitian :—the recalling the empress Domitia after having turned her away for her intrigues with a player. By omitting this fact in the Abridgment, and which is discovered through Suetonius, Xiphilin has evinced, he says, a deficient judgment; for Domitian's ill qualities are much better exposed, when it is known that he was mean-spirited enough to restore to the dignity of empress the prostitute of a player.

Abridgers, Compilers, and Translators, are now alike regarded with contempt; yet to form their works with skill requires an exertion of judgment, and frequently of taste, of which their contemners appear to have no due conception. Such literary labours, when performed with ability, the learned will not be found to want; and the unlearned have not the discernment necessary to give them a just value. But to such abridgers as Monsieur Le Grand, in his "Tales of the Minstrels," and Mr. Ellis, in his "English Metrical Romances," we owe much; and such writers must bring to their task a congeniality of genius, and even more taste, than their originals possessed. I must compare such to fine etchers after masters :—very few give the feeling touches in the right place!

It is an uncommon circumstance to quote the

Scriptures on subjects of *modern literature*; but on the present topic the elegant writer of the books of the Maccabees has delivered in a kind of preface to that history, very pleasing and useful instruction to an *Abridger*. I shall transcribe the passages, being concise, from Book ii. Chap. ii. v. 23, that the reader may have it at hand.—

"All these things, I say, being declared by Jason, of Cyrene, in *five books*, we will assay to *abridge* in one volume. We will be careful that they that will read may have *delight*, and that they that are desirous to commit to memory might have *ease*, and that all into whose hands it comes might have *profit*." How concise and Horatian! He then describes his literary labours with no insensibility:—"To us that have taken upon us this painful labour of *abridging*, it was not easy, but a matter of *sweat* and *watching*."—And the writer employs an elegant illustration, "Even as it is no ease unto him that prepareth a banquet, and seeketh the benefit of others; yet for the pleasuring of many, we will undertake gladly this great pain; leaving to the author the exact handling of every particular, and labouring to follow *the rules of an Abridgement*." He now embellishes his critical account with a sublime metaphor to distinguish the original from the copier:—"For as the master builder of a

new house must care for the whole building; but he that undertaketh to set it out, and point it, must seek out fit things for the adorning thereof; even so I think it is with us. To stand upon *every point*, and *go over things at large*, and to be *curious* in *particulars*, belongeth to the *first author* of the story; but to use *brevity*, and avoid *much labouring*, of the work, is to be granted to him that will make an Abridgment."

Quintilian has not a passage more elegantly composed, nor more judiciously conceived.

PROFESSORS OF PLAGIARISM AND OBSCURITY.

Among the most singular characters in literature may be ranked those who do not blush to profess publicly its most dishonourable practices. The first vender of printed sermons imitating ms. was, I think, Dr. Trusler. He to whom the following anecdotes relate had superior ingenuity. Like the famous orator Henley, he formed a school of his own. The present Lecturer openly taught not to *imitate* the best authors, but to *steal* from them!

Richesource, a miserable declaimer, called himself "Moderator of the Academy of Philosophical Orators." He taught in what manner a person destitute of literary talents might be-

come eminent for literature. He published the principles of his art under the title of "The Mask of Orators; or the manner of disguising with ease all kinds of composition; briefs, sermons, panegyrics, funeral orations, dedications, speeches, letters, passages, &c." I will give a notion of the work.—

The author very truly observes, that all who apply themselves to polite literature do not always find from their own funds a sufficient supply to ensure success. For such he labours; and teaches to gather, in the gardens of others, those fruits of which their own sterile grounds are destitute; but so artfully to gather, that the public shall not perceive their depredations. He dignifies this fine art by the title of PLAGIANISM, and he thus explains it:—

"The Plagianism of orators is the art, or an ingenious and easy mode, which some adroitly employ, to change, or disguise, all sorts of speeches of their own composition, or of that of other authors, for their pleasure, or their utility; in such a manner that it becomes impossible even for the author himself to recognise his own work, his own genius, and his own style, so skilfully shall the whole be disguised."

Our professor proceeds to inform us in what manner we are to manage the whole economy of the piece which is to be copied or disguised:

and which consists in giving a new order to the parts, changing the phrases, words, &c. An orator, for instance, having said that a plenipotentiary should possess three qualities,—*probity*, *capacity*, and *courage*; the plagiarist, on the contrary, may employ *courage*, *capacity*, and *probity*. This is only for a general rule, for it is too simple to practise frequently. To render the part perfect we must make it more complex, by changing the whole of the expressions. The plagiarist in place of *courage* will put *force*, *constancy*, or *vigour*. For *probity* he may say *religion*, *virtue*, or *sincerity*. Instead of *capacity*, he may substitute *erudition*, *ability*, or *science*. Or he may disguise the whole by saying, that the *plenipotentiary should be firm*, *virtuous*, and *able*.

The rest of this uncommon work is composed of passages, extracted from celebrated writers, which are turned into a new manner by the plagiarist; their beauties, however, are never improved by their dress. Several celebrated writers when young, particularly the famous Flechier, who addressed verses to him, frequented the lectures of this professor.

Richesource became so zealous in the cause of literature, that he published a volume, entitled, "The Art of Writing and Speaking; or a method of composing all sorts of letters, and

holding a polite conversation." He concludes his preface by advertising his readers, that authors who may be in want of essays, sermons, letters of all kinds, written pleadings and verses, may be accommodated on application to him.

Our professor was extremely fond of copious title-pages; which I suppose to be very attractive to certain readers; for it is a custom which the Richesources of the day fail not to employ. Are there persons who value *books* by the *length* of their *titles*; as formerly the ability of a *physician* was judged by the *size of his wig*?

To this article may be added an account of another singular school, where the professor taught *obscurity* in literary composition!

I do not believe, says Charpentier, that those who are unintelligible are very intelligent. Quintilian has justly observed, that the obscurity of a writer is generally in proportion to his incapacity. However, as there is hardly a defect which does not find partisans, the same author informs us of a Rhetorician, who was so great an admirer of obscurity, that he always exhorted his scholars to preserve it; and made them correct, as blemishes, those passages of their works which appeared to him too intelligible. Quintilian adds, that the greatest panegyric they could give to a composition in that school, was to declare, "I understand nothing of this

piece." Lycophron possessed this taste, and he protested that he would hang himself if he found a person who should understand his poem, called the "Prophecy of Cassandra." He succeeded so well, that this piece has been the stumbling-block of all the grammarians, scholiasts, and commentators; and remains inexplicable to the present day. Such works Charpentier admirably compares to those subterraneous places, where the air is so thick and suffocating that it extinguishes all torches. A most sophistical dilemma, on the subject of *obscurity*, was made by Thomas Anglus, or White, an English Catholic priest, the friend of Sir Kenelm Digby. This learned man frequently wandered in the mazes of metaphysical subtilties; and became perfectly unintelligible to his readers. When accused of this obscurity, he replied, "Either the learned understand me, or they do not. If they understand me, and find me in an error, it is easy for them to refute me; if they do not understand me, it is very unreasonable for them to exclaim against my doctrines."

This is saying all that the wit of man can suggest in favour of *obscurity!* Many, however, will agree with an observation made by Gravina on the over-refinement of modern composition, that "we do not think we have attained genius, till others must possess as much themselves to

understand us." Fontenelle, in France, followed by Marivaux, Thomas, and others, first introduced that subtilized manner of writing, which tastes more natural and simple reject; the source of such bitter complaints of obscurity.

LITERARY GERMANS AND DUTCH.

PERE BOUHOURS seriously asks if a German *can be a* BEL ESPRIT? This concise query was answered by Kramer, in a ponderous volume, which bears for title, *Vindiciæ nominis Germanici.* This mode of refutation does not prove that the question was *then* so ridiculous as it was considered. The Germans of the present day, although greatly superior to their ancestors, are still distant from that *acmé* of TASTE, which characterises the finished compositions of the French and the English authors. Nations display *genius* before they form *taste;* and in some of the productions of the modern Germans, it will be allowed that their imaginations are fertile and fervid; but perhaps the simple question of Bouhours still exists in its full force.

It was once the mode with English and French writers to dishonour them with the epithets of heavy, dull, and phlegmatic compilers, without

taste, spirit, or genius; genuine descendants of the ancient Boetians,

Crassoque sub aëre nati.

Many ingenious performances have lately shewn that this censure has now become unjust; and much more forcibly answer the sarcastic question of Bouhours than the thick quarto of Kramer.

Churchill finely says of Genius, that it is independent of situation,

'And may hereafter even in HOLLAND rise.'

Their celebrated Vondel, whom, as Marchand observes, the Dutch regard as their Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, has a strange defective taste. The greater part of his tragedies is drawn from the Scriptures; all badly chosen and unhappily executed. For instance, in his *Deliverance of the Children of Israel*, what must a man of taste suffer, when he observes that one of his principal characters is the *Divinity*? In his *Jerusalem destroyed* we are extremely shocked and disgusted with the long and tedious oration of the Angel Gabriel, who proves theologically, and his proofs extend through nine closely printed pages in quarto, that this destruction had been predicted by the prophets. And in the *Lucifer* of the same author, the subject is grossly scandalized by this

haughty spirit becoming stupidly in love with Eve, and it is for her he causes the rebellion of the evil angels, and the fall of our first parents. Poor Vondel kept a hosier's shop, which he left to the care of his wife, while he occupied the garret, where he indulged his poetical genius. His stocking shop failed, and his poems produced him more chagrin than glory. He was a bankrupt in trade; and was then ridiculed by his fellow-citizens as a madman. Vondel had no other master but his genius, which, with his uncongenial situation, occasioned all his errors.

Another Dutch poet is even less tolerable. Having written a long rhapsody concerning Pyramus and Thisbe, he concludes it by a ridiculous parallel between the death of these unfortunate victims of love, and the passion of Jesus Christ. He says,

> Om t'concluderem van onsen begrypt,
> Dees Historie moraliserende,
> Is in den verstande wel accorderende,
> By der Passie van Christus gebenedyt.

And upon this, after having turned Pyramus into the son of God, and Thisbe into the Christian soul, he proceeds with a number of comparisons; the latter always more impertinent than the former.

I believe it is well known that the actors on

the Dutch theatre are generally tradesmen, who quit their aprons at the hour of public representation. Their comedies are not only beneath criticism, but offensive to decency by the grossness of their buffooneries. It is told, as one of their comic incidents, that when a miller appeared to be in distress for want of wind to turn his mill, he had recourse to the novel scheme of placing his back against it, and, by certain eructations, imitated behind the scenes, the mill is soon set a-going. It is hard to rival such a depravity of taste.

I saw two of their most celebrated tragedies. The one was Gysbert Van Amstel, by Vondel; that is Gysbrecht of Amsterdam, a warrior, who in the civil wars preserved this city by his heroism. It is a patriotic historical play, and never fails to crowd the theatre towards Christmas, when it is usually performed five or six times successively. One of the acts concludes with a scene of a convent; the sound of warlike instruments is heard; the abbey is stormed; the nuns and fathers are slaughtered; with the aid of 'blunderbuss and thunder,' every Dutchman appears sensible of the pathos of the poet. But it does not here conclude. After this terrible slaughter, the conquerors and the vanquished remain for *ten minutes* on the stage, motionless in the attitudes in which they happened to fall!

not a word is spoken; and this pantomimic pathos is received with loud bursts of applause from the audience.

The other was the Ahasuerus of Schubart, or the Fall of Haman. In the triumphal entry Mordecai came forward on a genuine Flanders mare, that was as heavy, and fortunately as stupid, as Mordecai himself.

Some few specimens of the best Dutch poetry we have had cannot be accepted as an evidence in favour of the national poetical taste. When a nation has produced no works above mediocrity, with them a certain mediocrity is excellence; and their master-pieces, with a people who have made a greater progress in refinement, are hardly excusable as the works of a mere pupil.

THE PRODUCTIONS OF THE MIND NOT SEIZABLE BY CREDITORS.

When Crebillon, the French tragic poet, published his Catilina, it was attended with an honour to literature, which, though it is probably forgotten (for it was only registered, I think, as the news of the day), it becomes a collector zealous in the cause of literature to preserve. I shall give the circumstance, the petition, and the decree.

At the time Catilina was given to the public, the creditors of the poet had the cruelty to attach the produce of this piece, as well at the bookseller's, who had printed the tragedy, as at the theatre where it was performed. The poet, much irritated at these proceedings, addressed a petition to the King, in which he shewed that it was a thing yet unknown, that it should be allowed to class amongst seizable effects the productions of the human mind; that if such a practice was permitted, those who had consecrated their vigils to the studies of literature, and who have made the greatest efforts to render themselves, by this means, useful to their country, would see themselves in the cruel predicament of not daring to publish works, often precious and interesting to the state; that the greater part of those who devote themselves to literature, require for the necessaries of life those succours which they have a right to expect from their labours; and that it never has been suffered in France to seize the fees of lawyers, and other persons of liberal professions.

In answer to this petition, a decree immediately issued from the King's council, commanding a replevy of the arrests and seizures, of which the petitioner complained. This honourable decree is dated 21st May, 1749, and bore

the following title, 'Decree of the Council of his Majesty, in favour of Mr. Crebillon, author of the tragedy of Catalina, which declares that the productions of the mind are not amongst seizable effects.'

'Louis XV. is the first monarch (at least in France) who presents the noble example of bestowing a mark of consideration to the remains of a man of letters. This King not only testified his esteem of Crebillon by having his works printed at the Louvre, but also by consecrating to his glory a tomb of marble.'

CRITICS.

WRITERS who have been unsuccessful in original composition have their other productions immediately decried, whatever merit they might once have been allowed to possess. Yet this is very unjust; an author who has given a wrong direction to his literary powers may perceive at length where he can more securely point them. Experience is as excellent a mistress in the school of literature, as in the school of human life. Blackmore's epics are insufferable; yet neither Addison nor Johnson erred when they considered his philosophical poem as a valuable composition. An indifferent poet may exert the art of criticism in a very high degree; and if he

cannot himself produce an original work, he may yet be of great service in regulating the happier genius of another. This observation I shall illustrate by the characters of two French critics; the one is the Abbé D'Aubignac, and the other Chapelain.

Boileau opens his Art of Poetry by a common precept; he declares, that 'It is in vain a daring author thinks of attaining to the height of Parnassus if he does not feel the secret influence of heaven, and that his natal star has not formed him to be a poet.' This observation he founded on the character of our Abbé; who had excellently written on the economy of dramatic composition. His *Pratique du Theatre* gained him an extensive reputation. When he produced a tragedy, the world expected a finished piece; it was acted, and reprobated. The author, however, did not acutely feel its bad reception; he every where boasted that he, of all the dramatists, had most scrupulously observed the *rules* of Aristotle. The Prince de Guemené, famous for his repartees, sarcastically observed, 'I do not quarrel with the Abbé D'Aubignac for having so closely followed the precepts of Aristotle; but I cannot pardon the precepts of Aristotle, that occasioned the Abbé D'Aubignac to write so wretched a tragedy.'

The *Pratique du Theatre* is not, however, to

be despised, because the *Tragedy* of its author is despicable.

Perhaps the mere English reader will recollect the character of Chapelain; his unfortunate epic having rendered him so notorious. He had gained, and not undeservedly, great reputation for his critical powers. After a retention of above thirty years, his *Pucelle* appeared. He immediately became the butt of every unfledged wit, and his former works were eternally condemned! Insomuch that when Camusat published, after the death of our author, a little volume of extracts from his manuscript letters, it is curious to observe the awkward situation in which he finds himself. In his preface he seems afraid that the very name of Chapelain will be sufficient to repel the reader.

Camusat observes of Chapelain, that "He found flatterers who assured him his *Pucelle* ranked above the Æneid; and this Chapelain but feebly denied. However this may be, it would be difficult to make the bad taste which reigns throughout this poem agree with that sound and exact criticism with which he decided on the works of others. So true is it, that *genius* is very superior to a justness of mind which is *sufficient to judge* and to advise others. A bold and pliant genius will not suffer itself to be subjected to the strict regulations of art, whenever

it is to become merely its slave. And it was this noble audacity which leads to the sublime, of which Chapelain was incapable. His phlegm was constantly predominant."

It is an excellent observation, that the *talent of judging* may exist separately from the *power of execution*. An amateur may not be an artist, though an artist must be an amateur. And it is for this reason, that young authors are not to contemn the precepts of such critics as even the Abbé D'Aubignac, and Chapelain. It is to Walsh, a miserable versifier, that Pope stands indebted for the hint of our poetry then being deficient in correctness and polish; and it is from this fortunate hint that Pope derives a reputation which will probably never be surpassed. Dionysius Halicarnassensis, has composed a lifeless history; yet, as Gibbon observes, how admirably has *he* judged the masters, and defined the rules of historical composition! Gravina, with great taste and spirit has written on poetry and poets, but has composed tragedies which it would be difficult to read.

ANECDOTES OF AUTHORS CENSURED.

It is an ingenious observation made by a journalist of Trevoux, on perusing a criticism not ill-written, which pretended to detect seve-

ral faults in the compositions of Bruyere, that in ancient Rome the great men who triumphed amidst the applauses of those who celebrated their virtues, were at the same time compelled to listen to those who reproached them with their vices. This custom is not less necessary to the republic of letters than it was formerly to the republic of Rome. Without this it is probable that authors would be intoxicated with success, and would then relax in their accustomed vigour; and the multitude who took them for models would, for want of judgment, imitate their defects.

Sterne and Churchill were continually abusing the Reviewers, because they honestly told the one that obscenity was not wit, and obscurity was not sense; and the other that dissonance in poetry did not excel harmony, and that his rhymes were frequently prose lines of ten syllables cut into verse. They applauded their happier efforts; and these writers should have considered how much the praise of the judicious outweighs the stupid admiration of the mob. Notwithstanding all this, it is certain that so little discernment exists amongst common writers, and common readers, that the obscenity and flippancy of Sterne, and the bald verse, and prosaic poetry of Churchill, were precisely the portions which they selected for imitation;

the blemishes of great men are not less blemishes, but they are easiest to imitate.

Yet criticism may be too rigorous, and genius too sensible to its fairest attacks. Racine acknowledged that one of the severe criticisms he received had occasioned him more vexation than the greatest applauses had afforded him pleasure. Sir John Marsham, having published the first part of his "Chronology," suffered so much chagrin at the endless controversies which it raised (and some of his critics went so far as to affirm it was designed to be detrimental to Revelation), that he burnt the second part, which was ready for the press. Pope was observed to writhe with anguish in his chair, on hearing mentioned the letter of Cibber, with other temporary attacks. It is said of the great Montesquieu, that he was so much affected by the criticisms, true and false, which he daily experienced, that they hastened his death.

Pelisson has recorded, in his History of the French Academy, a literary anecdote, which forcibly shews the danger of caustic criticism. A young man from a remote province came to Paris with a play, which he considered as a master-piece. M. L'Etoille was more than just in his cruel criticism. He shewed the youthful bard a thousand glaring defects in his chef d'œuvre. The humbled country author burnt his tragedy,

returned home, took to his chamber, and died of vexation and grief. Of all unfortunate men, one of the unhappiest is a middling author endowed with too lively a sensibility for criticism. Athenæus, in his tenth book, has given us a lively portrait of this melancholy being. Anaxandrides appeared one day on horseback in the public assembly at Athens, to recite a dithyrambic poem, of which he read a portion. He was a man of fine stature, and wore a purple robe edged with golden fringe. But his character was dark and melancholy, which was the cause that he never spared his own writings. Whenever he was vanquished by a rival, he immediately gave his compositions to the druggists to be cut into pieces, to wrap their articles in, without ever caring to revise his writings. It is owing to this circumstance that he destroyed a number of pleasing compositions; age increased his sourness, and every day he became more and more dissatisfied at the awards of his auditors. Hence his Tereus, because it was not crowned by them, has not reached us, which, with other of his productions, deserved preservation, though not to have been publicly crowned.

Batteux having been chosen by the French government for the compilation of Elementary Books for the Military School, is said to have

felt their unfavourable reception so acutely, that he became a prey to excessive grief. It is believed that the lamentable death of Dr. Hawkesworth was occasioned by a similar circumstance. Government had consigned to his care the compilation of the voyages that pass under his name: —how he succeeeded is well known. He felt the public reception so sensibly, that he preferred the oblivion of death to the mortifying recollections of life.

On this interesting subject Fontenelle, in his "Eloge on Newton," has made the following observation:—"Newton was more desirous of remaining unknown, than of having the calm of life disturbed by those literary storms which genius and science attract about those who rise to eminence. In one of his letters we learn that his Treatise on Optics being ready for the press, several premature objections which appeared, made him abandon its publication.—"I should reproach myself (he said) for my imprudence, if I were to lose a thing so real as my ease to run after a shadow." But this shadow he did not miss: it did not cost him the ease he so much loved, and it had for him as much reality as ease itself. I refer to Bayle, in his curious article "Hipponax," note F. To these instances we may add the fate of the Abbé Cassagne, a man of learning, and not destitute

of talents. He was intended for one of the preachers at court; but he had hardly made himself known in the pulpit, when he was struck by the lightning of Boileau's Muse. He felt so acutely the caustic verses, that they rendered him almost incapable of literary labour; in the prime of life he became melancholy, and shortly afterwards died insane. A modern painter, it is known, never recovered from the biting ridicule of a popular, but malignant Wit. Cummyns, a celebrated quaker, confessed he died of an anonymous letter in a public paper, which, said he, "fastened on my heart, and threw me into this slow fever." Racine, who died of his extreme sensibility to a rebuke, confessed that the pain which one severe criticism inflicted, outweighed all the applause he could receive. The feathered arrow of an epigram, has sometimes been wet with the heart's blood of its victim. Fortune has been lost, reputation destroyed, and every charity of life extinguished, by the inhumanity of inconsiderate Wit.

Literary history records the fate of several, who may be said to have *died of Criticism*. But there is more sense and infinite humour in the mode which Phædrus adopted to answer the cavillers of his age. When he first published his fables, the taste for conciseness and simplicity was so much on the decline, that they were

both objected to him as faults. He used his critics, says Spence, as they deserved. To those who objected against the *conciseness* of his style, he tells a long *tedious story* (Lib. iii. Fab. 10, ver. 59), and treats those who condemned the *simplicity* of his style, with a run of *bombast verses*, that have a great many noisy elevated words in them, without any sense at the bottom—this in Lib. iv. Fab. 6.

VIRGINITY.

The writings of the Fathers, once formed the studies of the learned. These labours have many splendid passages, and abound with instances of that subtilty of argument which will repay the industry of the inquisitive. In the "Literary History of France," these writings are liberally quoted in the criticisms of its learned authors.

Saint Ambrose has written in three books, a "Treatise on Virgins." From this work, produced in the fourth century, we learn what lively impressions his exhortations made on the minds and hearts of girls, no less in the most distant provinces, than in the neighbourhood of Milan, where he resided. The Virgins of Bologna, amounting only, it appears, to the num-

ber of twenty, performed all kinds of needle-work, not merely to gain their livelihood, but also to be enabled to perform acts of liberality, and exerted their industry to entice other girls to join the holy profession of VIRGINITY. He exhorts daughters, in spite of their parents, and even their lovers, to consecrate themselves. "I do not blame marriage," he says, "I only shew the advantages of VIRGINITY."

He composed this book in so florid a style, that he considered it required some apology. A Religious of the Benedictines published a translation of this work in the year 1689.

So sensible was Saint Ambrose of the *rarity* of the profession he would establish, that he thus combats his adversaries: "They complain that human nature will be exhausted; but I ask who has ever sought to marry without finding women enough from amongst whom he might chuse? What murder, or what war, has ever been occasioned for a virgin? It is one of the consequences of marriage to kill the adulterer, and to war with the ravisher."

He wrote other treatises on VIRGINITY; one is called, *Of the perpetual Virginity of the Mother of God.* He attacks Bonosius on this subject, and defends the virginity, which was indeed greatly suspected by Bonosius, who, however, got nothing by this bold suspicion, but the

dreadful name of *Heretic*. A third treatise was entitled *Exhortation to Virginity*; a fourth, *On the Fate of a Virgin*, is more curious. He relates the misfortunes of one *Susannah*, who was by no means a companion for her name-sake; for, having made a vow of virginity, and taken the veil, she indulged afterwards in illicit gratifications, which she endeavoured to conceal, but the precaution was in vain; it only tended to render her more culpable. Her behaviour, indeed, had long afforded ample food for the sarcasms of the Jews and Pagans. Saint Ambrose compelled her to perform public penance, and after having declaimed on her double crime, gave her hopes of pardon, if, like "Sœur Jeanne," she would sincerely repent; and to complete her chastisement, he ordered her every day to recite the fiftieth psalm.

A GLANCE INTO THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

In the republic of Letters the establishment of an academy has been a favourite project; yet perhaps it is little more than an Utopian scheme. The united efforts of men of letters in Academies, have produced little. It would seem that no man likes to bestow his great labours on a small community, for whose members he him-

self does not feel, probably, the most flattering partiality in a familiar intercourse. The French Academy made a splendid appearance in Europe; yet when this society published their Dictionary, that of Furetiere's became a formidable rival; and Johnson did as much as the *forty* themselves. Voltaire confesses that the great characters of the literary republic were formed without the aid of Academies.—"For what then," he asks, "are they necessary?—To preserve and nourish the fire which great geniuses have kindled." By observing the *Junto* at their meetings we may form some opinion of the indolent manner in which they trifled away their time. We are fortunately enabled to do this, by a letter in which Patru describes, in a very amusing manner, the visit which Christina of Sweden took a sudden fancy to pay to the academy.

The Queen of Sweden having resolved to visit the French Academy, gave so short a notice of her design, that it was impossible to inform the majority of the members of her intention. About four o'clock fifteen or sixteen Academicians were assembled. Mr. Gombaut, one of the members, who did not know of the intended royal visit, and who was enraged against the Queen because she did not relish his verses, thought proper to shew his resentment by quitting the assembly.

She was received in a spacious hall. In the middle was a table covered with rich blue velvet, ornamented with a broad border of gold and silver. At its head was placed an arm-chair of black velvet embroidered with gold, and round the table were placed chairs with tapestry backs. The Chancellor had forgotten to hang in the hall the portrait of the Queen, which she had presented to the Academy, and which was considered by some as a great omission. About five, a footman belonging to the Queen enquired if the company were assembled. Soon after, a servant of the King informed the Chancellor that the Queen was at the end of the street; and immediately her carriage drew up in the court-yard. The Chancellor, followed by the rest of the members, went to receive her as she stepped out of her chariot; but the crowd was so great, that few of them could reach her majesty. Accompanied by the Chancellor, she passed through the first hall, followed by one of her ladies, the captain of her guards, and one or two of her suite.

When she entered the Academy she approached the fire, and spoke in a low voice to the Chancellor. She then asked why Mr. Menage was not there? and when she was told that he did not belong to the Academy, she asked why he did not? She was answered, that

however he might merit the honour, he had rendered himself unworthy of it by several disputes he had had with its members. She then enquired aside of the Chancellor whether the Academicians were to sit or stand before her? On this the Chancellor consulted with a member, who observed that in the time of Ronsard, there was held an assembly of men of letters before Charles IX. several times, and that they were always seated. The Queen conversed with M. Bourdelot; and suddenly turning to Madame de Bregis, told her that she believed she must not be present at the assembly; but it was agreed that this lady deserved the honour. As the Queen was talking with a member she suddenly quitted him, as was her custom, and in her quick way sat down in the arm chair; and at the same time the members seated themselves. The Queen observing that they did not, out of respect to her, approach the table, desired them to come near; and they accordingly approached it.

During these ceremonious preparations several officers of state had entered the hall, and stood behind the Academicians. The Chancellor sat at the Queen's left hand by the fire side; and at the right was placed M. de la Chambre, the Director; then Boisrobert, Patru, Pelisson, Cotin, the Abbé Tallemant, and others. M. de

Mezeray sat at the bottom of the table facing the Queen, with an inkstand, paper, and the portfolio of the company lying before him: he occupied the place of secretary. When they were all seated the Director rose, and the Academiciams followed him, all but the Chancellor, who remained in his seat. The Director made his complimentary address in a low voice, h body was quite bent, and no person but the Queen and the Chancellor could hear him. She received his address with great satisfaction.

These compliments concluded, they returned to their seats. The Director then told the Queen that he had composed a treatise on Pain, to add to his character of the Passions, and if it was agreeable to her majesty, he would read the first chapter.—Very willingly, she answered. Having read it, he said to her majesty, that he would read no more lest he should fatigue her. Not at all, she replied, for I suppose what follows resembles what I have heard.

Afterwards Mr. Mezeray mentioned that Mr. Cotin had some verses, which her majesty would doubtless find beautiful, and if it was agreeable they should be read. Mr. Cotin read them: they were versions of two passages from Lucretius: the one in which he attacks a providence, and the other, where he gives the origin of the world according to the Epicurean Sys-

tem: to these he added twenty lines of his own, in which he maintained the existence of a Providence. This done, an Abbé rose, and without being desired or ordered, read two sonnets, which by courtesy were allowed to be tolerable. It is remarkable that both these *poets* read their verses standing, while the rest read their compositions seated.

After these readings, the Director informed the Queen, that the ordinary exercise of the company was to labour on the Dictionary; and that if her majesty should not find it disagreeable, they would read a *cahier* or stitched MS. Very willingly, she answered. Mr. de Mezeray then read what related to the word *Jeu; Game.* Amongst other proverbial expressions was this: *Game of Princes, which only please the players;* to express a malicious violence committed by one in power. At this the Queen laughed heartily; and they continued reading all that was fairly written. This lasted about an hour, when the Queen observing that nothing more remained, arose, made a bow to the company, and returned in the manner she entered.

Furetiere, who was himself an Academician, has described the miserable manner in which time was consumed at their assemblies. I confess he was a satirist, and had quarrelled with

the Academy; there must have been, notwithstanding, sufficient resemblance for the following picture, however it may be overcharged. He has been blamed for thus exposing the Eleusinian mysteries of literature to the uninitiated.

"He who is most clamorous, is he whom they suppose has most reason. They all have the art of making long orations upon a trifle. The second repeats like an echo, what the first said; but generally three or four speak together. When there is a bench of five or six members, one reads, another decides, two converse, one sleeps, and another amuses himself with reading some dictionary which happens to lie before him. When a second member is to deliver his opinion, they are obliged to read again the article, which at the first perusal he had been too much engaged to hear. This is a happy manner of finishing their work. They can hardly get over two lines without long digressions; without some one telling a pleasant story, or the news of the day; or talking of affairs of state, and reforming the government."

That the French Academy were generally frivolously employed, appears also from an epistle to Balzac, by Boisrobert, the amusing companion of Cardinal Richelieu. "Every one

separately," says he, "promises great things; when they meet they do nothing. They have been *six years* employed on the letter F; and I should be happy if I were certain of living till they got through G."

The following anecdote D'Alembert has given concerning the *forty arm-chairs* of the Academicians. Those Cardinals who were Academicians for a long time had not attended the meetings of the Academy, because they thought that *arm-chairs* were indispensable to their dignity, and the Academy had then only common chairs. These Cardinals were desirous of being present at the election of Mr. Monnoie, that they might give him a distinguished mark of their esteem. "The King," says D'Alembert, "to satisfy at once the delicacy of their friendship, and that of their cardinalship, and to preserve at the same time that academical equality, of which this enlightened monarch, (Louis XIV.) well knew the advantage, sent to the academy forty arm-chairs for the forty Academicians: the same chairs which we now occupy; and the motive to which we owe them is sufficient to render the memory of Louis XIV. precious to the republic of letters, to whom it owes so many more important obligations!"

POETICAL AND GRAMMATICAL DEATHS.

It will appear by the following anecdotes, that men have died *poetically* and *grammatically*.

There must be some attraction existing in poetry which is not merely fictitious. It is certain that its genuine votarists have felt all its power on the most trying occasions. They have displayed the energy of their mind by composing or repeating verses, even with death on their lips.

The Emperor Adrian, dying, made that celebrated address to his soul, which is so happily translated by Pope. Lucan, when he had his veins opened by order of Nero, expired reciting a passage from his Pharsalia, in which he had described the wound of a dying soldier. Petronius did the same thing on the same occasion.

Patris, a poet of Caen, perceiving himself expiring, composed some verses which are justly admired. In this little poem he relates a dream in which he appeared to be placed next to a beggar, when, having addressed him in the haughty strain he would probably have employed on this side of the grave, he receives the following reprimand:

Ici tous sont egaux; je ne te dois plus rien;
Je suis sur mon fumier comme toi sur le tien.

Here all are equal; now thy lot is mine!
I on my dunghill, as thou art on thine.

Des Barreaux, it is said, wrote on his death-bed that sonnet which is well known, and which is translated in the "Spectator."

Margaret of Austria, when she was nearly perishing in a storm at sea, composed her epitaph in verse. Had she perished, what would have become of the epitaph? And if she escaped, of what use was it? She should rather have said her prayers. The verses however have all the *naiveté* of the times. They are—

Cy gist Margot, la gente demoiselle,
Qu'eut deux maris, et si mourut Pucelle.

Beneath this tomb is high-born Margaret laid,
Who had two husbands, and yet died a maid.

She was betrothed to Charles VIII. of France, who forsook her. Being next intended for the Spanish infant, in her voyage to Spain, she wrote these lines in a storm.

Mademoiselle de Serment was surnamed the philosopher. She was celebrated for her knowledge and taste in polite literature. She died of a cancer in her breast, and suffered her misfortune with exemplary patience. She expired

finishing these verses, which she addressed to Death.

Nectare clausa suo,
Dignum tantorum pretium tulit illa laborum.

Roscommon, at the moment he expired, with an energy of voice (says his biographer) that expressed the most fervent devotion, uttered two lines of his own version of "Dies Iræ!" Waller, in his last moments, repeated some lines from Virgil: and Chaucer took his farewell of all human vanities by a moral ode, entitled, "A balade made by Geffrey Chaucyer upon his dethe-bedde lying in his grete anguysse."

Hume furnishes me with an instance more interesting than any of the foregoing. Cornelius de Wit fell an innocent victim to popular prejudice. His death is thus noticed by our historian. "This man, who had bravely served his country in war, and who had been invested with the highest dignities, was delivered into the hands of the executioner, and torn in pieces by the most inhuman torments. Amidst the severe agonies which he endured he frequently repeated an ode of Horace, which contained sentiments suited to his deplorable condition." It was the third ode of the third book. It is difficult to restrain our tears on the fate of this illustrious philosopher and statesman.

I add another instance in the death of that delightful poet Metastasio. After having received the sacrament, a very short time before his last moments, he broke out with all the enthusiasm of poetry and religion into the following stanzas:

T'offro il tuo proprio figlio,
Che già d'amore in pegno,
Racchiuso in picciol segno
Si volle a noi donar.

A lui rivolgi il ciglio.
Guardo chi t'offro, e poi
Lasci, Signor, se vuoi,
Lascia di perdonar.

"I offer to thee, O Lord, thy own son, who already has given the pledge of love, inclosed in this thin emblem; turn on him thine eyes; ah! behold whom I offer to thee, and then desist, O Lord! and then desist, if thou canst desist, from mercy."

"The muse that has attended my course (says the dying Gleim in a letter to Klopstock,*) still hovers round my steps to the very verge of the grave." A collection of songs composed by Old Gleim on his death bed, it is said, were intended to be published.

Chatellard, a French gentleman, beheaded

* See Klopstock's death in "L'Allemagne;" recites his verses on May; vol. I. 252.

Scotland for having loved the Queen, and even for having attempted her honour, Brantome says, would not have any other viaticum than a poem of Ronsard. When he ascended the scaffold he took the hymns of this poet, and for his consolation read that on death: which he says is well adapted to conquer its fear. He preferred the poems of Ronsard to either a prayer-book or his confessor.

The Marquis of Montrose, when he was condemned by his judges to have his limbs nailed to the gates of four cities, the brave soldier said, that "he was sorry he had not limbs sufficient to be nailed to all the gates of the cities in Europe, as monuments of his loyalty." As he proceeded to his execution, he put this thought into beautiful verse.

Philip Strozzi, when imprisoned by Cosmo the First, great Duke of Tuscany, was apprehensive of the danger to which he might expose his friends (who had joined in his conspiracy against the duke) from the confessions which the rack might extort from him. Having attempted every exertion for the liberty of his country, he considered it as no crime therefore to die. He resolved on suicide. With the point of the sword, with which he killed himself, he first engraved on the mantle-piece of the chimney this verse of Virgil:

Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor.
Rise, some avenger, from our blood!

Such persons realise that beautiful fiction of the ancients, who represent the swans of Cayster singing at their death; and have been compared to the nightingale singing with a thorn in its breast.

The following anecdotes are of a different complexion: they may perhaps excite a smile.

Pere Bouhours was a French grammarian, who had been justly accused of paying too scrupulous an attention to the minutiæ of letters. He was more solicitous of his *words* than his *thoughts*. It is said, that when he was dying, he called out to his friends (a correct grammarian to the last), "*Je* VAS, *ou je* VAIS *mourir; l'un ou l'autre se dit!*"

When Malherbe was dying, he reprimanded his nurse for making use of a solecism in her language! And when his confessor represented to him the felicities of a future state in low and trite expressions, the dying critic interrupted him: "Hold your tongue," he said, "your wretched style only makes me out of conceit with them!"

The favourite studies and amusements of the learned La Mothe le Vayer, consisted in accounts of the most distant countries. He gave a striking proof of the influence of this master-

when death hung upon his lips. A friend entering, and drawing the curtains of his bed to take his eternal farewell of him, the dying man turned to him, and said with a faint voice, "Well, what news have you from the Great Mogul?"

Several men of science have died in a scientific manner. Haller, the greatest of Physicians, beheld his end approach with the utmost composure. He kept feeling his pulse to the last moment, and when he found that life was almost gone, he turned to his brother Physician, and observed, "My friend, the artery ceases to beat,"—and almost instantly expired.

De Lagny, who was intended by his friends for the study of the law, having fallen on an Euclid, found it so congenial to his dispositions, that he devoted himself to Mathematics. In his last moments, when he retained no further recollection of the friends who surrounded his bed, one of them, perhaps to make a philosophical experiment, thought proper to ask him the square of 12; our dying mathematician instantly, and perhaps without knowing that he answered, it replied, "144."

SCARRON.

Scarron is among the French writers what Butler is amongst our own. As a burlesque

poet he has occasionally great merit. He is now, however, little read; for the uniformity of the burlesque style, is as intolerable as the uniformity of the serious. There is something uncommon in the anecdotes of his life, although he was a mere author. I have collected them from various sources, and perhaps some are not generally known.

His family was noble, and rich; few are born with more flattering hopes than was Scarron. His father, 'a counsellor with an income of 25,000 livres, married a second wife, and the lively Scarron soon became the object of her hatred. He studied and travelled, and took the clerical tonsure; but certainly discovered dispositions more suitable to the pleasures of his age than to the gravity of his profession. He formed an acquaintance with the wits of the times; and in the carnival of 1638 committed a youthful extravagance, for which his remaining days formed a continual punishment. He there, L'Advocat tells us, disguised himself as a savage; the singularity of a naked man attracted crowds. After having been hunted by the mob, he was forced to escape from his pursuers, and concealed himself in a damp marsh. A freezing cold seized him, and threw him, at the age of 27 years, into a kind of palsy; a cruel disorder which tormented him all his life. "It was

thus," he says, "that pleasure deprived me suddenly of legs which had danced with elegance, and of hands which could manage the pencil and the lute."

Goujet, in his Bibliotheque Françoise, vol. xvi. p. 307, without stating this anecdote, describes his disorder as a sharp humour which distilled itself on his nerves, and baffled all the skill of his physicians; the sciatica, rheumatism, in a word, a complication of maladies attacked him, sometimes successively, sometimes together, and made of our poor Abbé a sad spectacle. He thus describes himself in one of his letters; and who could be in better humour?

"I have lived to thirty, if I reach forty I shall only add many miseries to those which I have endured these last eight or nine years. I had my person well made, though short; my disorder has shortened it by a foot. My head is a little broad for my shape; my face is full enough for my body to appear very meagre; I I have hair enough to render a wig unnecessary; I have got many white hairs, in spite of the proverb. My teeth, formerly square pearls, are now of the colour of wood, and will soon be of the colour of slate. My legs and my thighs first first formed an obtuse angle, afterwards an equal angle, and, at length, an acute one. My thighs

and my body form another; and my head inclining on my stomach, I do not ill represent a Z. I have got my arms shortened as well as legs, and my fingers as well as my arms. In a word, I am an abridgment of human miseries."

It is said in the Segraisiana, p. 87, that he had the free use of nothing but his tongue and his hands; and that he wrote on a portfolio, which was placed on his knees.

Balzac said of Scarron, that he had gone further in insensibility than the stoics, who were satisfied in appearing insensible to pain; but Scarron was gay, and amused all the world with his sufferings.

He pourtrays himself thus humourously in his address to the Queen:

Je ne regarde plus qu'en bas,
Je suis torticolis, j'ai la tête penchante;
Ma mine devient si plaisante.
Que quand on en riroit, je ne m'en plaindrois pas.

"I can only see under me; I am wry-necked; my head hangs down; my appearance is so droll, that if people laugh, I shall not complain."

He says elsewhere,

Parmi les torticolis
Je passe pour des plus jolis.

Among your wry-necked people I pass for one of the handsomest.

After having suffered this distortion of shape, and these acute pains for four years, he quitted his usual residence, the quarter du Marais, for the baths of the fauxbourg Saint Germain. He took leave of his friends, by addressing some verses to them, entitled, *Adieux aux Marais;* in this piece he highly praises many celebrated persons. When he was brought into the street in a chair, the pleasure of seeing himself there once more overcame the pains which the motion occasioned, and he has celebrated his transport by an ode which has for title, "The way from le Marais to the fauxbourg Saint Germain."

These and other baths which he tried had no effect on his miserable disorder. But a new affliction was added to the catalogue of his griefs.

His father, who had hitherto contributed to his necessities, having joined a party against Cardinal Richelieu, was exiled. This affair was rendered still more unfortunate by his mother-in-law with her children at Paris, profiting by the absence of her husband, and appropriating the money of the family to her own use.

Hitherto Scarron had had no connection with Cardinal Richelieu. The behaviour of his father had even rendered his name disagreeable to the minister, who was by no means prone to forgiveness. Scarron, however, when he thought his passion softened, ventured to present a

petition; and which is considered by the critics as one of his happiest productions. Richelieu permitted it to be read to him, and acknowledged that it afforded him much pleasure; and that it was *pleasantly dated*. This *pleasant date* is thus given by Scarron.

Fait a Paris dernier jour d'Octobre,
Par moi Scarron, qui malgré moi suis sobre,
L'an que l'on prit le fameux Perpignan,
Et sans canon la Ville de Sedan.

At Paris done, the last day of October,
By me, Scarron, who wanting wine am sober,
The year they took fam'd Perpignan,
And, without cannon-ball, Sedan.

This was flattering the Minister adroitly in two points very agreeably to him. The poet augured well of the dispositions of the Cardinal, and lost no time to return to the charge, by addressing an ode to him, to which he gave the title of THANKS, as if he had already received the favours which he hoped he should receive! But all was lost by the death of the Cardinal. In this ode I think he has caught the leading idea from a hymn of Ronsard; Catherine of Medicis was prodigal of her *promises*, and for this reason Ronsard dedicated to her the hymn to PROMISE.

When Scarron's father died he brought his

mother-in-law into court; and, to complete his misfortunes, lost his suit. The cases which he drew up for the occasion were so extremely burlesque, that the world could not easily conceive how a man could amuse himself so pleasantly on a subject on which his existence depended.

The successor of Richelieu, the Cardinal Mazarin, was insensible to his applications. He did nothing for him, although the poet dedicated to him his *Typhon*, a burlesque poem, in which the author describes the wars of the giants with the gods. Our bard was so irritated at this neglect, that he suppressed a sonnet he had written in his favour, and aimed at him several satirical bullets. Scarron, however, consoled himself for this kind of disgrace with those select friends who were not inconstant in their visits to him. The Bishop of Mans also, solicited by a friend, gave him a living in his diocese. When Scarron had taken possession of it, he began his *Roman Comique*, ill translated into English by *Comical Romance*. He made friends by his dedications. Such resources were indeed necessary, for he not only lived well, but had made his house an asylum for his two sisters by his father's first marriage, and who there found refuge from an unfeeling step-mother.

It was about this time that the beautiful and accomplished Mademoiselle D'Aubigné, afterwards so well known by the name of Madame de Maintenon, she who was to be one day the Mistress, if not the Queen of France, formed with Scarron the most romantic connection. She united herself in marriage with one whom she well knew might be a lover, but could not be a husband. It was indeed, that under his direction she began to form her taste, and to embellish with her presence his little residence, where, however, assembled the most polished courtiers and some of the finest geniuses of Paris. Such was the influence this marriage had over Scarron, that it has been observed after this period his writings became more correct and more agreeable than those which he had previously composed. Scarron on his side gave a proof of his attachment to this deserving lady; for by marrying her he lost his living of Mans. But though without wealth, he was accustomed to say, as is recorded in the Segraisiana, that his wife and he would not live uncomfortably by the produce of his estate and *Marquisate of Quinet*. It was thus he called the revenue which his compositions produced, and which *Quinet* his bookseller published.

Scarron has given one of his dedications to his dog, to ridicule those writers who dedicate their

works indiscriminately, though no author has been more liberal of dedications than himself; but, as he confessed, he made dedication a kind of business. When he was low in cash he always dedicated to some lord, whom he praised as warmly as his dog, but whom probably he did not esteem so much.

Segrais informs us, that when Scarron was visited, previous to general conversation his friends were taxed with a perusal of whatever he had written since he saw them before. One day Segrais and a friend called on him. Take a chair, said our author, and let me *try* my Roman Comique. He took some manuscript books of his work and read several pages, and when he observed that they laughed, he said, "Good, this goes well; my book can't fail of success since it obliges such able persons as yourselves to laugh:" he then remained silent to receive their compliments. He used to call this *trying his romance*, as a taylor *tries* his *coat*. He was agreeable and diverting in all things, even in his complaints and passions. Whatever he conceived he immediately expressed; he was, indeed, too free in his expressions, but his amiable lady corrected him of this in three months after their marriage.

He petitioned the Queen, in his droll manner,

to be permitted the honour of being her *patient* by right of office.* These verses form a part of his address to her majesty:

Scarron, par la grace de Dieu,
Malade indigne de la Reine,
Homme n'ayant ni feu, ni lieu,
Mais bien du mal et de la peine;
Hopital allant et venant,
Des jambes d'autrui cheminant,
Des siennes n'ayant plus l'usage,
Souffrant beaucoup, dormant bien peu,
Et pourtant faisant par courage
Bonne mine et fort mauvais jeu.

"Scarron, by the grace of God, an unworthy patient of the Queen; a man without a house, though a moving hospital of disorders; walking only with other people's legs, with great sufferings, but little sleep: and yet, in spite of all, very courageously shewing a hearty countenance, though indeed he plays a losing game."

She smiled, and granted him what he desired; and what was better, she added a small pension. This pension he lost by lampooning the minister Mazarin; but M. Fouquet very generously granted him a more considerable one from his private purse.

The termination of the miseries of this face-

* A friend would translate, "malade de la Reine, the Queen's *sick man*." I think there is more humour in supposing her majesty to be his *physician*; in which light Scarron might consider her for the 500 crowns she gave him for a pension.

tious genius was now approaching. To one of his friends who was taking leave of him for some time, Scarron said, "I shall soon die; the only regret I have in dying is not to be enabled to leave some property to my wife, who is possessed of infinite merit, and whom I have every reason imaginable to admire and to praise."

One day he was seized with so violent a fit of the hiccough, that his friends now considered his prediction would soon be verified. When it was over, "if ever I recover," said our facetious bard, "I will write a bitter satire against the hiccough." The satire, however, was never written, for he died soon after. A little before his death, when he observed his relations and domestics weeping and groaning, he was not much affected, but humorously told them, "My children, you will never weep for me so much as I have made you laugh." And a few moments before he died, he said that, "he never thought it was so easy a matter to laugh at the approach of death."

The burlesque compositions of Scarron are now neglected by the French. This species of writing was much in vogue till attacked by the critical Boileau; and it was not difficult to annihilate such puny writers as D'Assoucy, Dulot, and their stupid admirers. It is said he spared Scarron because his merit, though it appeared

but at intervals, was uncommon. Yet so much were burlesque verses the fashion after Scarron's works, that the booksellers would not publish poems, but with the word Burlesque in the title page. In 1649, was printed a dull and a serious poem, which shocked pious sensibility. It bore for title, "The Passion of our Lord, in burlesque verses."

Swift, in his dotage, appears to have been gratified by such puerilities as Scarron frequently wrote. The reader may recollect an ode which Swift calls "A Lilliputian Ode," consisting of verses of three syllables. Perhaps he had such lines as the following in his mind. Scarron has composed a long epistle in verses of three syllables, addressed to Sarrazin. It is pleasant, and the following lines will serve as a specimen.

Epitre a Mr. Sarrazin.

Sarrazin
Mon voisin
Cher ami,
Qu'a demi,
Je ne voi,
Dont ma foi
J'ai depit
Un petit,
N'es-tu pas
Barrabas,
Busiris,
Phalaris,

Ganelon,
Le Felon ?

He describes himself

Un pauvret,
Tres maigret,
Au col tors,
Dont le corps
Tout tortu,
Tout bossu.
Suranné,
Decharné,
Est reduit,
Jour et nuit,
A souffrir
Sans guerir
Des tourmens
Vehemens.

He complains of Sarrazin's not visiting him, threatens to reduce him into powder if he comes not quickly ; and concludes,

Mais pourtant
Repentant
Si tu viens
Et te tiens
Seulement
Un moment
Avec nous
Mon courroux
Finira,
Et Cætera.

The Roman Comique of our author is well

known, and abounds with pleasantry, with wit, and character. His Virgile Travestie it is impossible to read long: this we likewise feel in "Cotton's Virgil travestied," which has notwithstanding considerable merit. Buffoonery after a certain time exhausts our patience. It is the chaste actor only who can keep the attention awake for a length of time. It is said that Scarron intended to write a tragedy. It would have probably been like the tragic acting of the comic Mr. Quick, who once facetiously treated us with personating Richard the Third. In all Scarron's works there is occasionally fire, and a lively fancy; but too often they are insipid and trivial. In a word, he excelled in the burlesque; but in this kind of writing it is difficult to acquire fame, although the writer may occupy the first place.

PETER CORNEILLE.

Exact Racine and CORNEILLE's noble fire
Shew'd us that France had something to admire.

POPE.

THE great Corneille having finished his studies, devoted himself to the bar; but this was not the stage on which his abilities were to be displayed.—He followed the occupation of a lawyer for some time, without taste, and

without success. A trifling circumstance discovered to the world and to himself a different genius. A young man who was in love with a girl of the same town, having solicited him to be his companion in one of those secret visits which he paid to the lady, it happened that the stranger pleased infinitely more than his introducer. The pleasure arising from this adventure excited in Corneille a talent which had hitherto been unknown to him, and he attempted, as if it were by inspiration, dramatic poetry. On this little subject, he wrote his comedy of Melite, in 1625. At that moment the French drama was at a low ebb; the most favourable ideas were formed of our juvenile poet, and comedy, it was expected, would now reach its perfection. After the tumult of approbation had ceased, the critics thought that Melite was too simple and barren of incident. Angered by this criticism, our poet wrote his Clitandre, and in that piece has scattered incidents and adventures with such a licentious profusion, that the critics say, he wrote it rather to censure the public taste than to accommodate himself to it. In this piece, the persons combat on the theatre; there are murders and assassinations; heroines fight; officers appear in search of murderers, and women are disguised as men. There is matter sufficient for a romance of ten volumes; "And

yet (says a French critic) nothing can be more cold and tiresome." He afterwards indulged his natural genius in various other performances; but began to display more forcibly his tragic powers in Medea. A comedy which he afterwards wrote was a very indifferent composition. He regained his full lustre in the famous Cid, a tragedy, of which he preserved in his closet translations in all the European languages, except the Sclavonian and the Turkish. He pursued his poetical career with uncommon splendour the Horaces, Cinna, and at length in Polieuctes; which productions (the French critics say), can never be surpassed.

At length he gave "Pertharite," a tragedy, which proved unsuccessful. This so much disgusted our veteran bard, that, like Ben Jonson, he could not conceal his chagrin in the preface to this tragedy. He there tells us that he renounces for ever the theatre; and indeed this *eternity* lasted for *several years!*

Disgusted by the fate of his unfortunate tragedy, he directed his poetical pursuits to a different species of composition. He now finished his translation, in verse, of the "Imitation of Jesus Christ, by Thomas à Kempis." This work, perhaps for the singularity of its author becoming a religious writer, was attended with astonishing success. The observations of Fon-

tenelle on this production are, however, just. He tells us, that he does not find in this translation the prevailing charm of the original, which consists in its simplicity and *naiveté;* which are all lost in that pomp of versification so natural to Corneille. This book, he continues, the finest that ever proceeded from the hand of man (since the gospel does not come from man) would not go so direct to the heart, and would not seize on it with such force, if it had not a natural and tender air, to which even that negligence which prevails in the style greatly contributes. After this eulogium of our critic, I must add, that Voltaire says, "It is reported that Corneille's translation of the Imitation of Jesus Christ has been printed thirty-two times, it is as difficult to believe this as it is to *read the book once!*"

Corneille seems not to have been ignorant of the truth of this criticism. In his dedication of it to the Pope, he says, "The translation which I have chosen, by the simplicity of its style, precludes all the rich ornaments of poetry, and far from increasing my reputation, must be considered rather as a sacrifice made to the glory of the Sovereign Author of all which I may have acquired by my poetical productions." This is an excellent elucidation of the truth of that precept of Johnson which respects

religious poetry; but of which the author of "Calvary" seems not to have been sensible. The merit of religious compositions appears, like this "Imitation of Jesus Christ," to consist in simplicity, and consequently is inimical to the higher poetical embellishments.

When Racine, the son, published a long poem on "Grace" taken in its holy sense, the most unhappy subject, at least for poetry, it was said that he had written on *Grace* without *Grace*.

During the space of six years Corneille rigorously kept his promise of not writing for the theatre. At length, overpowered by the persuasions of his friends, and probably by his own inclinations, he once more directed his studies to the drama. He recommenced in 1659, and finished in 1675. During this time he wrote ten new pieces, and published a variety of little religious poems, which, although they do not attract the attention of posterity, were then read with great delight, and probably preferred to the finest tragedies by the good catholics of the day.

In 1675 he terminated his career. In the last year of his life his mind became so enfeebled as to be incapable of thinking; and, as is noticed in the former volume, he died in extreme poverty. It is true, that his uncommon genius

had been amply rewarded; but amongst his talents we cannot count that one of preserving those favours of fortune which he had acquired.

Fontenelle, his nephew, has given us a minute and interesting description of this great man, of which I shall borrow the greater part. I must first observe, what Marville says, that when he saw Corneille, he had the appearance of a country tradesman, and that he could not conceive how a man of so rustic an appearance could put into the mouths of his Romans such heroic sentiments. Corneille was sufficiently large and full in his person; his air simple and vulgar; always negligent; and very little solicitous of pleasing by his exterior.—His face had something agreeable, his nose large, his mouth not unhandsome, his eyes full of fire, his physiognomy lively, with strong features, well adapted to be transmitted to posterity on a medal or bust. His pronunciation was not very distinct: and he read his verses with force, but without grace.

He was acquainted with polite literature, with history, and politics; but he generally knew them best as they related to the stage. For other knowledge he had neither leisure, curiosity, nor much esteem. He spoke little, even on subjects which he perfectly understood. He did not embellish what he said, and to discover

the great Corneille it became necessary to read him.

He was of a melancholy disposition, had something blunt in his manner, and sometimes he appeared rude; but in fact he was no disagreeable companion, and made a good father and husband. He was tender, and his soul was very susceptible of friendship. His constitution was very favourable to love, but never to debauchery; and rarely to violent attachments. His soul was fierce and independent: it could never be managed, for it would never bend. This indeed rendered him very capable of pourtraying Roman virtue, but incapable of improving his fortune. Nothing equalled his incapacity for business but his aversion: the slightest troubles of this kind occasioned him alarm and terror. He was never satiated with praise, although he was continually receiving it; but if he was sensible to fame, he was far removed from vanity.

What Fontenelle observes of Corneille's love of fame, is strongly proved by our great poet himself, in an epistle to a friend, in which we find the following description of himself, a pleasing instance how vanity becomes even agreeable in a superior genius:

Nous nous aimons un peu, c'est notre foible à tous;
Le prix que nous valons qui la scait mieux que nous?

Et puis la mode en est, et la cour l'autorise,
Nous parlons de nous même avec tout franchise,
La fausse humilité ne met plus en credit.
Je sçais ce que je vaux, et crois ce qu'on m'en dit;
Pour me faire admirer je ne fais point de ligue;
J'ai peu de voix pour moi, mais je les ai sans brigue;
Et mon ambition, pour faire plus de bruit
Ne les va point queter de reduit en reduit
Mon travail sans appui monte sur le theatre,
Chacun en liberté l'y blame ou l'idolatre;
Là, sans que mes amis prechent leur sentimens,
J'arrache quelquefois leurs applaudissemens;
Là, content du secces que le merite donne,
Par d'illustres avis je n'eblouis personne;
Je satisfais ensemble et peuple et courtisans;
Et mes vers en tous lieux sont mes seuls partisans;
Par leur seule beauté ma plume est estimée,
Je ne dois qu'à moi seul toute ma renommée;
Et pense toutefois n'avoir point de rival,
A qui je fasse tort, en le traintant d'egal.

There is something very nervous, and at the same time pleasing in this frank declaration of Corneille. His sentiments in English verse are given with more faithfulness than elegance. His is the energetic expression of an elevated genius: to write like him, one must feel oneself in a similar situation; and which perhaps no living writer can experience.

Self-love prevails too much in every state;
Who, like ourselves, our secret worth can rate?

Since 'tis a fashion authorised at court,
Frankly our merits, we ourselves report.
A proud humility will not deceive;
I know my worth; what others say, believe.
To be admir'd I form no petty league:
Few are my friends, but gained without intrigue.
My bold ambition, destitute of grace,
Scorns still to beg their votes from place to place.
On the fair stage my scenic toils I raise,
While each is free to censure or to praise:
And there, unaided by inferior arts,
I snatch the applause that rushes from their hearts.
Content by Merit still to win the crown,
With no illustrious names I cheat the town.
The galleries thunder, and the pit commends;
My verses, every where, my only friends!
'Tis from their charms alone my praise I claim;
'Tis to myself alone, I owe my fame;
And know no rival whom I fear to meet,
Or injure, when I grant an equal seat.

Voltaire censures Corneille for making his heroes say continually, they are great men. But in drawing the character of an hero he draws his own. All his heroes are only so many Corneilles in different situations.

Thomas Corneille attempted the same career as his brother: perhaps his name was unfortunate, for it naturally excited a comparison which could not be favourable to him. Gaçon, the Dennis of his day, wrote the following smart impromptu under his portrait:

Voyant le portrait de Corneille,
Gardez vous de crier merveille!
Et dans vos transports n'allez pas,
Prendre ici *Pierre* pour *Thomas*.

POETS.

Instead of hounds that make the wooded hils
Talke in a hundred voyces to the rils,
I like the pleasing cadence of a line,
Struck by the concert of the sacred nine.
Browne's Brit. Past. ii. B. 4.

In all ages there has existed a party formed against poets. This faction consists of those frigid intellects which are incapable of that glowing expansion so necessary to feel the charms of an art, which only addresses itself to the imagination; or of writers who, having proved unsuccessful in their devotion to the muses, revenge themselves by reviling them; and also of religious minds who consider the ardent effusions of poetry as dangerous to the morals and peace of society.

Plato, amongst the ancients, is the model of those moderns who profess themselves to be ANTI-POETICAL. This writer, in his ideal republic, characterises a man who occupies himself with composing verses as a very dangerous member of society, from the inflammatory ten-

dency of his writings. It is by arguing from its abuse, that he decries this enchanting talent. At the same time it is to be recollected, that no head was more finely organised for the visions of the muse than Plato's: he was a true poet, and had addicted himself in his prime of life to the cultivation of the art, but perceiving that he could not surpass his inimitable original, Homer, he employed this insidious manner of depreciating his works. In the Phædrus he describes the feelings of a genuine Poet. To become such, he says, it will never be sufficient to be guided by the rules of art, unless we also feel the exstacies of that *furor*, almost divine, which in this kind of composition is the most palpable and least ambiguous character of a true inspiration. Cold minds, ever tranquil and ever in possession of themselves, are incapable of producing exalted poetry; their verses must always be feeble, diffusive, and leave no impression; the verses of those who are endowed with a strong and lively imagination, and who, like Homer's personification of Discord, have their heads incessantly in the skies, and their feet on the earth, will agitate you, burn in your heart, and drag you along with them; breaking like an impetuous torrent, and filling your breast with that enthusiasm with which they are themselves possessed.

Such is the character of a *poet* in a *poetical age!*—The tuneful race have many mere mechanics; Pontipool manufacturers, inlayers, burnishers, gilders, and filers.

Men of taste are constantly disgusted when they turn over the voluminous productions of mere men of learning, particularly the works of antiquaries, by encountering a thousand gross railleries and false judgments concerning poetry and poets. Locke has expressed a marked contempt of poets; but we see what ideas he formed of poetry by his warm panegyric of one of Blackmore's epics! Selden, a scholar of profound erudition, has given us *his* opinion concerning poets. "It is ridiculous for a *lord* to print verses; he may make them to please himself. If a man in a private chamber twirls his band-strings, or plays with a rush to please himself, it is well enough; but if he should go into Fleet-street, and sit upon a stall and twirl a band-string, or play with a rush, then all the boys in the street would laugh at him."—As if a fine poetical talent is to be compared to the twirling of a band-string or playing with a rush! —A poet, related to an illustrious family, and who did not write unpoetically, entertained a far different notion concerning poets. So persuaded was he that to be a true poet required an elevated mind, that it was a maxim with him, that

no writer could be an excellent poet who was not descended from a noble family. This opinion is as absurd as that of Selden's:—but when one party will not grant enough, the other always assumes too much. The great Pascal, whose extraordinary genius was discovered in the sciences, knew little of the nature of poetical beauty. He said "Poetry has no settled object." This was the decision of a geometrician, not of a poet. "Why should he speak of what he did not understand?" asked the lively Voltaire. Poetry is not an object which comes under the cognizance of philosophy or wit.

Longuerue had profound erudition; but he decided on poetry in the same manner as those learned men. Nothing so strongly characterises such literary men, as the following observations in the Longuerana, p. 170.

"There are two *books on Homer*, which I prefer to *Homer himself*. The first is *Antiquitates Homericæ* of Feithius, where he has extracted every thing relative to the usages and customs of the Greeks; the other is *Homeri Gnomologia per Duportum*, printed at Cambridge. In these two books is found every thing valuable in Homer without being obliged to get through his *Contes à dormir debout!*" Thus men of *science* decide on men of *taste!* There are who study Homer and Virgil as the blind

travel through a fine country, merely to get to the end of their journey. It was observed at the death of Longuerue that in his immense library not a volume of poetry was to be found. He had formerly read poetry, for indeed he had read every thing. Racine tells us, that when young he paid him a visit; the conversation turned on *poets;* our *erudit* reviewed them all with the most ineffable contempt of the poetical talent, from which he said we learn nothing. He seemed a little charitable towards Ariosto. —" As for that *Madman,* (said he) he has amused me sometimes." Dacier, a poetical pedant after all, was asked who was the greater poet, Homer or Virgil? he honestly answered. " Homer by a thousand years!"

But it is mortifying to find among the *anti-poetical* even *poets* themselves! Malherbe, the first poet in France in his day, appears little to have esteemed the art. He used to say, that " a good poet was not more useful to the state than a skilful player of nine-pins!" Malherbe wrote with costive labour. When a poem was shewn to him which had been highly commended, he sarcastically asked if it would " lower the price of bread?" In these instances he maliciously confounded the *useful* with the *agreeable* arts. Be it remembered that Malherbe had a cynical heart, cold and unfeeling;

his character may be traced in his poetry: labour and correctness, without one ray of enthusiasm.

Le Clerc was a scholar not entirely unworthy to be ranked amongst the Lockes, the Seldens, and the Longuerues; and his opinions are as just concerning poets. In the Parrhasiana he has written a treatise on poets in a very unpoetical manner. I shall notice his coarse railleries relating to what he calls "the personal defects of poets." In vol. I. p. 33, he says, "In the Scaligerana we have Joseph Scaliger's opinion concerning poets. 'There never was a man who was a poet, or addicted to the study of poetry, but his heart was puffed up with his greatness.'—This is very true. The poetical enthusiasm persuades those gentlemen, that they have something in them superior to others, because they employ a language peculiar to themselves. When the poetic furor seizes them its traces frequently remain on their faces, which make connoisseurs say with Horace,

Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit.
There goes a madman, or a bard.

Their thoughtful air and melancholy gait make them appear insane; for, accustomed to versify while they walk, and to bite their nails in appa-

rent agonies, their steps are measured and slow, and they look as if they were reflecting on something of consequence, although they are only thinking, as the phrase runs, of nothing." He proceeds in the same elegant strain to enumerate other defects. I have only transcribed the above description of our jocular scholar, with an intention of describing those exterior marks of that fine enthusiasm, of which the poet is peculiarly susceptible, and which have exposed many an elevated genius to the ridicule of the vulgar.

I find this admirably defended by Charpentier: "Men may ridicule as much as they please, those gesticulations and contortions which poets are apt to make in the act of composing; it is certain however that they greatly assist in putting the imagination into motion. These kinds of agitation do not always shew a mind which labours with its sterility; they frequently proceed from a mind which excites and animates itself. Quintilian has nobly compared them to those lashings of his tail which a lion gives himself when he is preparing to combat. Persius, when he would give us an idea of a cold and languishing oration, says that its author did not strike his desk nor bite his nails.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues.

These exterior marks of enthusiasm may be

illustrated by the following curious anecdote:—Domenichino the painter, was accustomed to act the characters of all the figures he would represent on his canvass, and to speak aloud whatever the passion he meant to describe could prompt. Painting the martyrdom of St. Andrew, Carracci one day caught him in a violent passion, speaking in a terrible and menacing tone. He was at that moment employed on a soldier, who was threatening the saint. When this fit of enthusiastic abstraction had passed, Carracci ran and embraced him, acknowledging that Domenichino had been that day his master; and that he had learnt from him the true manner to succeed in catching the expression; that great pride of the painter's art.

Thus different are the sentiments of the intelligent and the unintelligent on the same subject. A Carracci embraced a kindred genius for what a Le Clerc or a Selden would have ridiculed.

Poets, I confess, frequently indulge *reveries*, which, though they offer no charms to their friends, are too delicious to forego. In the ideal world, peopled with all its fairy inhabitants, and ever open to their contemplation, they travel with an unwearied foot. Crebillon, the celebrated tragic poet, was enamoured of solitude, that he might there indulge, without in-

terruption, in those fine romances with which his imagination teemed. One day when he was in a deep reverie, a friend entered hastily; "Don't disturb me," cried the poet, "I am enjoying a moment of happiness; I am going to hang a villain of a minister, and banish another who is an idiot."

Amongst the anti-poetical may be placed the father of the great monarch of Prussia. George the Second was not more the avowed enemy of the muses. Frederic would not suffer the prince to read verses; and when he was desirous of study, or of the conversation of literary men, he was obliged to do it secretly. Every poet was odious to his majesty. One day, having observed some lines written on one of the doors of the palace, he asked a courtier their signification. They were explained to him; they were Latin verses composed by Wachter, a man of letters, then resident at Berlin. The King immediately sent for the bard, who came warm with the hope of receiving a reward for his ingenuity. He was astonished however to hear the King, in a violent passion, accost him, "I order you immediately to quit this city and my kingdom." Wachter took refuge in Hanover. As little indeed was this anti-poetical monarch a friend to philosophers. Two or three such kings might perhaps renovate the ancient bar-

barism of Europe. Barratier, the celebrated child, was presented to his majesty of Prussia as a prodigy of erudition; the King, to mortify our ingenious youth, coldly asked him, "If he knew the law?" The learned boy was constrained to acknowledge that he knew nothing of law. "Go," was the reply of this Augustus, "Go, and study it before you give yourself out as a scholar." Poor Barratier renounced for this pursuit his other studies, and persevered with such ardour, that he became an excellent lawyer at the end of fifteen months; but his exertions cost him at the same time his life!

Every monarch, however, has not proved so destitute of poetic sensibility as this Prussian. Francis I. gave repeated marks of his attachment to the favourites of the muses, by composing several occasional sonnets, which are dedicated to their eulogy. Andrelin, a French poet, enjoyed the happy fate of Oppian, to whom the emperor Caracalla counted as many pieces of gold as there were verses in one of his poems; and with great propriety they have been called "golden verses." Andrelin when he recited his poem on the Conquest of Naples before Charles VIII. received a sack of silver coin, which with difficulty he carried home. Charles IX. says Brantome, loved verses, and recompensed poets, not indeed immediately,

but gradually, that they might always be stimulated to excel. He used to say that poets resembled race horses, that must be fed but not fattened, for then they were good for nothing. Marot was so much esteemed by kings, that he was called the poet of princes, and the prince of poets.

In the early state of poetry what honours are not paid to its votaries! Ronsard, the French Chaucer, was the first who carried away the prize at the Floral games. This meed of poetic honour was an eglantine composed of silver. The reward did not appear equal to the merit of the work and the reputation of the poet. It was on this occasion the city of Toulouse had a Minerva of solid silver struck, of considerable value. This image was sent to Ronsard, accompanied by a decree, in which he was declared, by way of eminence, "The French poet."

It is a curious anecdote to add, that when, at a later period a similar Minerva was adjudged to Maynard for his verses, the Capitouls of Toulouse, who were the executors of the Floral gifts, to their shame, out of covetousness, never obeyed the decision of the poetical judges. This circumstance is noticed by Maynard in an epigram, which bears this title; *On a Minerva of silver, promised but not given.*

The anecdote of Margaret of Scotland, (wife of the Dauphin of France,) and Alain the poet, is, perhaps, generally known. Who is not charmed with that fine expression of her poetical sensibility? The person of Alain was repulsive, but his poetry had attracted her affections. Passing through one of the halls of the palace, she saw him sleeping on a bench; she approached and kissed him. Some of her attendants could not conceal their astonishment that she should press with her lips those of a man so frightfully ugly. The amiable princess answered, smiling, I did not kiss the man, but the mouth which has uttered so many fine things.

The great Colbert paid a pretty compliment to Boileau and Racine. This minister at his villa, was enjoying the conversation of our two poets, when the arrival of a prelate was announced; turning quickly to the servant, he said, "Let him be shewn every thing except myself!"

To such attentions from this great minister, Boileau alludes in these verses:

— Plus d'un grand, m'aima jusques à la tendresse;
Et ma vûe à Colbert inspiroit l'allegresse.

Several pious persons have considered it as highly meritable to abstain from the reading of poetry! A good father, in his account of the last hours of Madame Racine, the lady of the

celebrated tragic poet, pays high compliments to her religious disposition, and which, he says, was so austere, that she would not allow herself to read poetry, which she considered as a dangerous pleasure; and he highly commends her for never having read the tragedies of her husband! Arnauld, though so intimately connected with Racine for many years, had not read his compositions. When, at length, he was persuaded to read Phædra, he declared himself to be delighted, but complained that the poet had set a dangerous example, in making the manly Hypolitus dwindle to an effeminate lover. As a critic, Arnauld was right: but Racine had his nation to please. Such persons entertain notions of poetry similar to that of an ancient father, who calls poetry the wine of Satan; or to that of the religious and austere Nicole, who was so ably answered by Racine; he said, that dramatic poets were public poisoners, not of bodies, but of souls.

Poets, it is acknowledged, have foibles peculiar to themselves. They sometimes act in the daily commerce of life, as if every one was concerned in the success of their productions. Poets are too frequently merely poets. Segrais has recorded that the following maxim of Rochefoucault, was occasioned by reflecting on the characters of Boileau and Racine. "It dis-

plays," he writes, "a great poverty of mind to have only one kind of genius." On this Segrais observes, and Segrais knew them intimately, that their conversation only turned on poetry; take them from that, and they knew nothing. It was thus with one Du Perrier, a good poet, but very poor. When he was introduced to Pelisson, who wished to be serviceable to him, the minister said, "In what can he be employed? He is only occupied by his verses."

All these complaints are not unfounded; yet, perhaps, it is unjust to expect from an excelling artist all the petty accomplishments of frivolous persons, who have studied no art but that of practising on the weaknesses of their friends. The enthusiastic votary, who devotes his days and nights to meditations on his favourite art, will rarely be found that despicable thing, a mere man of the world. Du Bos has justly observed, that men of genius, born for a particular profession, appear inferior to others when they apply themselves to other occupations. That distraction which arises from their continued attention to their ideas, renders them awkward in their manners. Such defects are even a proof of the activity of genius.

It is a common foible with poets to read their verses to friends. Segrais has ingeniously observed, to use his own words, "When young

I used to please myself in reciting my verses indifferently to all persons; but I perceived when Scarron, who was my intimate friend, used to take his portfolio and read his verses to me, although they were good, I frequently became weary. I then reflected, that those to whom I read mine, and who, for the greater part, had no taste for poetry, must experience the same disagreeable sensation. I resolved for the future to read my verses only to those who entreated me, and to read but few at a time. We flatter ourselves too much; we conclude that what pleases us must please others. We will have persons indulgent to us, and frequently we will have no indulgence for those who are in want of it." An excellent hint for young poets, and for those old ones who carry odes and elegies in their pockets, to inflict the pains of the torture on their friends.

The affection which a poet feels for his verses has been frequently extravagant. Bayle, ridiculing that parental tenderness which writers evince for their poetical compositions, tells us, that many having written epitaphs on friends whom they believed on report to have died, could not determine to keep them in their closet, but suffered them to appear in the life-time of those very friends whose death they celebrated. In another place he says, that such is their in-

fatuation for their productions, that they prefer giving to the public their panegyrics of persons whom afterwards they satirized, rather than suppress the verses which contain those panegyrics. We have many examples of this in the poems, and even in the epistolary correspondence of modern writers. It is customary with most authors, when they quarrel with a person after the first edition of their work, to cancel his eulogies in the next. But poets and letter writers frequently do not do this: because they are so charmed with the happy turn of their expressions, and other elegancies of composition, that they prefer the praise which they may acquire for their style to the censure which may follow from their inconsistency.

After having given a hint to *young* poets; I shall offer one to *veterans*. It is a common defect with them that they do not know when to quit the muses in their advanced age. Bayle says, "Poets and orators should be mindful to retire from their occupations, which so peculiarly require the fire of imagination: yet it is but too common to see them in their career, even in the decline of life. It seems as if they would condemn the public to drink even the lees of their nectar." Afer and Daurat were both poets who had acquired considerable reputation, but which they overturned when they

persisted to write in their old age without vigour and without fancy.

> What crouds of these impenitently bold,
> In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,
> They run on poets, in a raging vein,
> E'en to the dregs and squeezings of the brain:
> Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,
> And rhyme with all the rage of impotence.
>
> POPE.

It is probable he had Wycherley in his eye when he wrote this. The veteran bard wrote latterly much indifferent verse; and Pope had freely given his opinion, by which he lost his friendship!

It is still worse when aged poets devote their exhausted talents to *divine poems*, as did Waller; and Milton in his second epic. Such poems, observes Voltaire, are frequently entitled "*sacred poems;*" and *sacred* they are, for no one touches them. From a soil so arid what can be expected but insipid fruits? Chevreau informs us, that Corneille told him, several years before his death, that he had taken leave of the theatre, and that he had lost his poetical powers with his teeth.

Poets have sometimes displayed an obliquity of taste in their female favourites. As if conscious of the power of ennobling others, some have selected them from the lowest classes, whom hav-

ing elevated into divinities, they have addressed in the language of poetical devotion. The Chloe of Prior, after all his raptures, was a plump bar-maid. Ronsard addressed many of his verses to Miss Cassandra, who followed the same occupation: in one of his sonnets to her, he fills it with a crowd of personages taken from the Iliad, which to the honest girl must have all been extremely mysterious. Colletet, a French bard, married three of his servants. His last lady was called *la belle Claudine*. Ashamed of such menial alliances, he attempted to persuade the world that he had married the tenth Muse; and for this purpose published verses in her name. When he died, the vein of Claudine became suddenly dry. She indeed published her "Adieux to the Muses;" but it was soon discovered that all the verses of this lady, including her "Adieux," were the compositions of her husband.

Sometimes, indeed, the ostensible mistresses of poets have no existence; and a slight occasion is sufficient to give birth to one. Racan and Malherbe were one day conversing on their amours; that is, of selecting a lady who should be the object of their verses. Racan named one, and Malherbe another. It happening that both had the same name, Catharine, they passed the whole afternoon in forming it into an ana-

gram. They found three: Arthenice, Eracinthe, and Charinté. The first was preferred; and many a fine ode was written in praise of the beautiful Arthenice!

Poets change their opinions of their own productions wonderfully at different periods of life. Baron Haller was in his youth warmly attached to poetic composition. His house was on fire, and to rescue his poems he rushed through the flames. He was so fortunate as to escape with his beloved manuscripts in his hand. Ten years afterwards he condemned to the flames those very poems which he had ventured his life to preserve.

Satirists, if they escape the scourges of the law, have reason to dread the cane of the satirised. Of this kind we have many anecdotes on record; but none more poignant than the following. Benserade was caned for lampooning the Duke d'Epernon. Some days afterwards he appeared at court, but being still lame from the rough treatment he had received, he was forced to support himself by a cane. A wit, who knew what had passed, whispered the affair to the Queen. She, dissembling, asked him if he had the gout? "Yes, madam, replied our lame satirist, and therefore I make use of a cane." "Not so," interrupted the malignant Bautru, "Benserade in this imitates those holy martyrs

who are always represented with the instrument which occasioned their sufferings."

ROMANCES.

Of the agreeable classes of literature, the Romance has always been held the most delightful: it has been elegantly defined as the offspring of Fiction and Love. Men of learning have amused themselves with tracing the epocha of Romances. In this research they have displayed more ingenuity than judgment. That learning is desperate which would fix on the inventor of the first Romance.

Let us be satisfied in deriving it from the Theagenes and Chariclea of Heliodorus, a bishop who lived in the fourth century, and whose work has been lately translated. This elegant prelate was the Grecian Fenelon. It has been prettily said, that posterior Romances seem to be the children of the marriage of Theagenes and Chariclea. The Romance of "The Golden Ass," by Apuleius, may be noticed here, and the tale of "Cupid and Psyche" remains unrivalled, while the "Daphne and Chloe" of Longus is inexpressibly delicate, simple, and inartificial, but sometimes offends, because Nature there "plays her virgin fancies."

Beautiful as these compositions are, when the imagination of the writer is sufficiently stored with accurate observations on human nature, in their birth, like many of the fine arts, they found in the zealots of religion, men who opposed their progress. However Heliodorus may have delighted those who were not insensible to the felicities of a fine imagination, and to the enchanting elegancies of style, he raised himself, among his brother ecclesiastics, enemies, who at length so far prevailed that it was declared by a synod, his performance was dangerous to young persons, and that if the author did not suppress it, he must resign his bishoprick. We are told he preferred his Romance to his bishoprick. Even so late as in Racine's time it was held a crime to peruse these unhallowed pages. He informs us that the first effusions of his muse were in consequence of studying that ancient Romance, which his master observing him to devour with the keenness of a famished man, he snatched it from his hands and flung it in the fire. A second copy experienced the same fate. What could Racine do? He bought a third, and took the precaution of devouring it secretly till he got it by heart; after which he offered it to his master with a smile, to burn if he chose, like the others.

The decision of these bigots was founded in

their opinion of the immorality of such works. They alledged that the writers paint too warmly to the imagination, address themselves too forcibly to the passions, and in general, by the freedom of their representations, hover on the borders of indecency. Let it be sufficient, however, to observe, that those who condemned the liberties which these writers take with the imagination, could indulge themselves with the Anacreontic voluptuousness of the wise *Solomon*, when sanctioned by the authority of the church.

The marvellous powers of romance over the human mind is exemplified in this curious anecdote of Oriental literature.

Mahomet found they had such an influence over the imaginations of his followers, that he has expressly forbidden them in his Koran; and the reason is given in the following anecdote:—An Arabian merchant having long resided in Persia, returned to his own country while the prophet was publishing his Koran. The merchant, among his other riches, had a treasure of Romances concerning the Persian heroes. These he related to his delighted countrymen, who considered them to be so excellent, that the legends of the Koran were neglected, and they plainly told the prophet that their "Persian Tales" were superior to his. Alarmed, he immediately had a visitation from the angel

Gabriel, declaring them impious and pernicious, hateful to God and Mahomet. This checked their currency; and all true believers yielded the exquisite delight of poetic fictions for the holy insipidity of religious visions. Yet these Romances may be said to have outlived the Koran itself; for they have spread into regions which the Koran could never penetrate. Even to this day Colonel Capper in his travels across the Desert, saw "Arabians sitting round a fire, listening to their tales with such attention and pleasure, as totally to forget the fatigue and hardship with which an instant before they were entirely overcome." Wood, in his journey to Palmyra, notices the same circumstance:—"At night the Arabs sat in a circle drinking coffee, while one of the company diverted the rest by relating a piece of history on the subject of Love or War, or with an extempore tale."

Opinions differ concerning the origin of Romances of modern date. The Spaniards, who borrowed them from the French, called them *Romanzes*, which also did the Italians.

Dom Rivet, one of the learned associates in the Literary History of France, fixes their origin in the twelfth century. He says, that the most ancient Romance known is one which appeared in the middle of that century, under the title of Philomena, or the Beloved. This Romance

contains the pretended exploits of Charlemagne, before Narbonne. At Toulouse they have preserved a copy of the "Philomena" in its original language: that is to say,—The Romaunt or polished; such as was then spoken at court. They preferred this language to the Latin, which was then that of the common people, but vitiated with their corruptions*.

* The *Romaunt*, or *polished*, according to Rivet's *account*, was *only* spoken at *court*, while a mongrel Latin was used by the vulgar. In the *Histoire de la Litterature Française, par Messieurs Labastide et D'Ussieux*, is found the following account of this language: "Under the dominion of the first French, the customs and the laws of the inhabitants of Gaul took a new form. There was no virtue, but that of a ferocious bravery; no superiority, but that of force; and no genius, but the art of wielding arms. The Grecian language was entirely lost: that of the Romans was altered by the jargon of the Francs and Burgundians. It is from this *mixture* that the *Romaunt Language* proceeds: an idiom which only retained some gross shadows of Latin." Mr. Ellis, in his "Early English Metrical Romances," says, "It is generally admitted that the word *Romance* was first employed to signify the Roman language as spoken in the European provinces of the Empire; and in its most extensive sense comprised *all the dialects* of which the basis was the *vulgar Latin*, whatever might be the other materials which entered into their construction. The name was therefore equally applicable to the Italian, the Spanish, and French.—The word *Romance* in old French is sometimes written *Roman*, and sometimes *Romant*, whence our English word." It came at last to be exclusively applied to *Tales of Chivalry* after our *Norman Conquest*, because they were written in that dialect of the French which had been then introduced among us.

Mr. Ellis has recently published his "Specimens of the Early English Metrical Romances," an elegant analysis of the ancient ones. Learned enquiries have now traced the origin of romantic fiction to three sources.—The first romances were merely Metrical Histories; but the florid marvellous was soon introduced to enliven the frigid annals. From Scandinavia issued forth the giants, dragons, witches, and enchanters. In the East, Arabian fancy bent her Iris of many-softened hues, over a delightful land of fiction; while the Welsh, in their emigration to Britany, are believed to have brought with them their national fables. That subsequent race of Romancers called *Troubadours* were so called from *Troveurs*, or finders, culling and compiling the domestic tales from all these sources. Millot and Sainte Palaye have preserved, in their "Histories of the Troubadours," their curious literary compositions. They were a most romantic race of men; military and religious subjects were their themes. They were bold and satirical on Princes, and even on Priests: severe Moralists; and Libertines in their verse; yet so refined and chaste in their manners, that few husbands were alarmed at the enthusiastic language [illegible] addressed to their wives. The most romantic incidents [illegible] told of their loves.

From these productions, in their improved

state, poets of all nations have drawn their richest inventions. The agreeable wildness of that fancy, which characterised the eastern nations, was caught by the Crusaders. When they returned home, they mingled in their own the customs of each country. The Saracens, who were men like themselves, because they were of another religion, and were therefore their enemies, were pictured under the tremendous form of *Paynim Giants*. The credulous reader of that day followed with trembling anxiety the *Red-cross Knight*. It was thus that fiction embellished religion, and religion invigorated fiction. Such incidents have enlivened the cantos of Ariosto, and adorned the epic of Tasso. Spenser is the child of their creation; and it is certain that we are indebted to them for some of the bold and strong touches of Milton. Our great poet marks his affection for "these lofty Fables and Romances, among which his young feet wandered." Collins was bewildered among their magical seductions; and Dr. Johnson was enthusiastically delighted by the old Spanish folio Romance of "Felixmarte of Hircania," and similar works. The most ancient Romances were originally composed in verse before they were converted into prose: no wonder that the lacerated members of the poet have been cherished by the sympathy

of poetical souls. Don Quixote's was a very agreeable insanity.

The most voluminous of these ancient Romances, Duchat tells us, is Le Roman de Perceforest. I have seen an edition in six folio volumes, and its author has been called the French Homer by the writers of his age. In the class of Romances of chivalry we have several translations in the black-letter. Such are the "Mort D'Arthur; Huon of Bourdeaux, &c." The best translations, now very rare and high-priced, are those of Lord Berners, the admirable translator of Froissart, in the reign of Henry VIII, and not the least of his merits, is now the genuine antique cast of his style. Amadis de Gaul has been lately given by Mr. Southey in the ancient style. The Oberon of Wieland has delighted all poetical readers by the wonders and the inventions of Sir Huon. All these Romances require in these times a certain degree of patient indulgence from their prolixity; their triteness and their Platonic amours,—but they never have been equalled for the wildness of their inventions, the ingenuity of their incidents, and the simplicity of their style and manners.

As a specimen of their ingenious inventions, I shall select two romantic adventures:—

The title of the extensive romance of Perce-

forest opens thus, "The most elegant, delicious, mellifluous, and delightful history of Perceforest, King of Great-Britain, &c." the most ancient edition is that of 1528. The present adventure is finely narrated, but too long to be inserted here. The writers of these Gothic fables, lest they should be considered as mere triflers, pretended to an allegorical meaning concealed under the texture of their fable. From the following adventure we learn the power of beauty in making *ten days* appear as *yesterday!* Alexander the Great, in search of Perceforest, parts with his knights in an enchanted wood, and each vows they will not remain longer than one night in one place. Alexander, accompanied by a page, arrives at Sebilla's castle, who is a sorceress. He is taken by her witcheries and beauty, and the page, by the lady's maid, falls into the same mistake as his master, who thinks he is there only one night. They enter the castle with deep wounds, and issue perfectly recovered. I transcribe the latter part as a specimen of the manner. When they were once out of the castle, the king said, "Truly, Floridas, I know not how it has been with me; but certainly Sebilla is a very honourable lady, and very beautiful, and very charming in conversation. Sire, (said Floridas,) it is true; but one thing surprises me:—how is it

that our wounds have healed in one night; I thought at least ten or fifteen days were necessary. Truly, said the king, that is astonishing! Now king Alexander met Gadiffer, king of Scotland, and the valiant knight Le Tors. Well, said the king, have ye news of the king of England? Ten days we have hunted him, and cannot find him out. How, said Alexander, did we not separate *yesterday* from each other? In God's name, said Gadiffer, what means your majesty? It is *ten days!* Have a care what you say, cried the king. Sire, replied Gadiffer, it is so; ask Le Tors. On my honour, said Le Tors, the king of Scotland speaks truth. Then, said the king, some of us are enchanted. Floridas, didst thou not think we separated *yesterday?* Truly, truly, your majesty, I thought so! But when I saw our wounds healed in one night, I had some suspicion that WE were *enchanted.*"

In the old romance of Melusina, this lovely fairy, though to the world unknown as such, enamoured of Count Raymond, marries him, but first extorts a solemn promise that he will never disturb her on Saturdays. On those days the inferior parts of her body are metamorphosed to that of a mermaid, as a punishment for a former error. Agitated by the malicious insinuations of a friend, his curiosity and his

jealousy one day conduct him to the spot she retired to at those times. It was a darkened passage in the dungeon of the fortress. His hand gropes its way till it feels an iron gate oppose it; nor can he discover a single chink, but at length perceives by his touch, a loose nail; he places his sword in its head and screws it out. Through this hole he sees Melusina in the horrid form she is compelled to assume. That tender mistress, transformed into a monster bathing in a fount, flashing the spray of the water from a scaly tail! He repents of his fatal curiosity: she reproaches him, and their mutual happiness is for ever lost! The moral design of the tale evidently warns the lover to revere a *Woman's Secret!*

Such are the works which were the favourite amusements of our English court, and which doubtless had a due effect in refining the manners of the age, in diffusing that splendid military genius, and that tender devotion to the fair sex which dazzle us in the reign of Edward III. and through that enchanting labyrinth of History constructed by the gallant Froissart. In one of the revenue rolls of Henry III. there is an entry of "Silver clasps and studs for his Majesty's *great book of Romances*;" and it has been ingeniously observed by Dr. Moore, that the

enthusiastic admiration of Chivalry which Edward III. manifested during the whole course of his reign was probably in some measure owing to his having studied the *clasped book* in his great grandfather's library.

The Italian Romances of the fourteenth century were spread abroad in great numbers. They formed the polite literature of the day. But if it is not permitted to authors freely to express their ideas, and give full play to the imagination, these works must never be placed in the study of the rigid moralist. They, indeed, pushed their indelicacy to the verge of grossness, and seemed rather to seek, than to avoid scenes, which a modern would blush to describe. They, to employ the expression of one of their authors, were not ashamed to name what God had created. Cinthio, Bandello, and others, but chiefly Boccacio, rendered libertinism agreeable by the fascinating charms of a polished style and a luxuriant imagination.

This, however, must not be admitted as an apology for immoral works; for poison is still poison, even when it is delicious. Such works were, and still continue to be, the favourites of a nation which is stigmatised for being prone to illicit pleasures and impure amours. They are still curious in their editions, and are not parsimonious in their price for what they call an

uncastrated copy*. There are many Italians not literary men, who are in possession of an ample library of these old novelists.

If we pass over the moral irregularities of these romances, we may discover a rich vein of invention, which only requires to be released from that rubbish which disfigures it, to become of an invaluable price. The *Decamerons*, the *Hecatommiti*, and the *Novellas* of these writers, made no inconsiderable figure in the little library of our Shakspeare. Chaucer is a notorious imitator and lover of them.—His "Knight's Tale" is little more than a paraphrase of "Boccacio's Teseoide." Fontaine has caught all their charms with all their licentiousness. From such works, these great poets, and many of their contemporaries, frequently borrowed their plots; not uncommonly kindled at their flame the ardour of their genius; but bending too submissively to their own peculiar taste, or that of their age, in extracting the ore they have not purified it of the alloy. The origin of these tales must be traced to the inventions of the Troubadours, who found and adopted them from various

* Cinthio's Novels, in two very thick volumes 12mo, are commonly sold at the price of five or six guineas. Bandello is equally high; and even in Pope's time it appears by the correspondence of Lady Pomfret, that a copy sold at fifteen guineas!

nations. Of these tales, Le Grand has fortunately printed a curious collection. Of these writers Mr. Ellis observes, in his elegant preface to "Way's Fabliaux," that the authors of the "Cento Novelle Antiche," Boccacio, Bandello, Chaucer, Gower,—in short, the writers of all Europe, have probably made use of the inventions of the elder fablers. They have borrowed their general outlines, which they have filled up with colours of their own, and have exercised their ingenuity in varying the drapery, in combining the groupes, and in forming them into more regular and animated pictures.

We must now turn our contemplation to the French romances of the last century. They were then carried to a point of perfection which, as romances, they cannot exceed. To this the Astrea of D'Urfé greatly contributed. As this work is founded on several curious circumstances, I shall make it the subject of the following article; for it may be considered as a literary curiosity. It was followed by the Illustrious Bassa, the Great Cyrus, Clelia, &c. which, though not adapted to the present age, gave celebrity to their authors. Their style, as well as that of the Astrea, is diffuse and languid. Zaide, and the Princess of Cleves, though master-pieces of the kind, are little adapted to the genius of the present race of readers.

It is not surprising that Romances have been regarded as pernicious to good sense, morals, taste, and literature. It was in this light they were even considered by Boileau, whose temperament was never poetical, and therefore he grovelled and bit in satire.

I must not omit noticing an oration which a celebrated jesuit pronounced against these works. It is true he exaggerates; and it has been finely observed that he hurls his thunders on flowers. He entreats the magistrates not to suffer the foreign Romances to be scattered amongst the people; but to lay on them heavy penalties as on prohibited goods; and represents this prevailing taste as being more pestilential than the plague itself. He has drawn a striking picture of a family devoted to Romance reading; he there describes women occupied day and night with their perusal; children just escaped from the lap of their nurse grasping in their little hands the fairy tales; and a country squire seated in an old arm-chair, and reading to his family the most wonderful passages of the ancient works of chivalry.

These Romances went out of fashion with our square-cocked hats, said a lively writer; they had exhausted the patience of the public, but from them sprung NOVELS. They attempted to allure attention by this inviting title, and

reducing their works from ten, to two volumes. The name of Romance disgusted; and they substituted those of histories, lives, memoirs, and adventures. In these works they quitted the marvellous incidents, the heroic projects, the complicated and endless intrigues, and the exertion of noble passions. — Heroes were not now taken from the throne: they were sought for even amongst the lowest ranks of the people. Scarron seems to allude to this degradation of the heroes of Fiction: for in hinting at a new comic History he had projected, he tells us he gave it up suddenly because he had "heard that his hero had just been hanged at Mans."

Novels, as they are *manufactured* now, form a library of illiterate authors for illiterate readers; but as they are *created* by genius, are precious to the Philosopher. They paint the manners of a nation more perfectly than any other species of composition: hence we observe as it were passing under our own eyes the refined frivolity of the French; the gloomy and disordered sensibility of the German; and the petty intrigues of the modern Italian in some Venetian Novels. We have shewn the world that we possess writers of the first order in this delightful province of Fiction and of Truth; for every Fiction invented naturally must be true. After the abundant invective poured on

this class of books, it is time to settle for ever the Controversy, by asserting that these works of Fiction are among the most instructive of every polished nation, and must contain all the useful truths of human life, if composed with genius. These in fact are great pictures of the passions useful to our youth to contemplate. That acute philosopher, Adam Smith, has given an opinion most favourable to NOVELS. "The Poets and Romance Writers who best paint the refinements and delicacies of Love and Friendship, and of all other private and domestic affections, Racine and Voltaire, Richardson, Marivaux, and Riccoboni, are in this case much better instructors than Zeno, Chrysippus, or Epictetus."

The history of Romances has been recently given by Mr. Dunlop, with equal taste and curiosity.

THE ASTREA.

The book I notice is forgotten as the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sidney, which was modelled on it.

I bring the Astrea forwards to point out in what an ingenious manner a fine imagination can veil the common incidents of life, and turn whatever it touches into gold.

Honoré D'Urfé was the descendant of an illustrious family. His brother Anne married Diana of Chateaumorand, the wealthy heiress of another great house. After a marriage of no less duration than twenty-two years, this union was broken by the desire of Anne himself, for a cause which the delicacy of Diana had never revealed. Anne then became an ecclesiastic. Some time afterwards, Honoré, desirous of retaining the great wealth of Diana in the family, addressed this lady, and married her. This union, however, did not prove fortunate. Diana like the Goddess of that name, was a huntress, continually surrounded by her dogs.—They dined with her at table, and slept with her in bed.—This insupportable nuisance could not be patiently endured by the elegant Honoré. He was also disgusted with the barrenness of Diana, who was only delivered every year of abortions. He separated from her, and retired to Piedmont, where he passed his remaining days in peace, without feeling the thorns of marriage and ambition rankling in his heart. In this retreat he composed his Astrea: a pastoral romance, which was the admiration of Europe during half a century. It forms a striking picture of human life, for the incidents are facts beautifully concealed. They relate the amours and gallantries of the court of Henry IV. The

personages in the Astrea display a rich invention; and the work might be still read, were it not for those wire-drawn and languishing conversations which it was once the custom of introducing in romances. There is a modern edition of this work, by the Abbé Souchai: in which he has *curtailed* these tiresome dialogues; the work, nevertheless, consists of ten duodecimo volumes.

Patru informs us, that when a youth he visited Honoré in his retirement, and gathered from him with some difficulty a few explanations of those circumstances which he had concealed under a veil of fiction.

In this romance, Celidée, to cure the unfortunate Celidon, and to deprive Thamire at the same time of every reason for jealousy, tears her face with a pointed diamond, and disfigures it in so cruel a manner. that she excites horror in the breast of Thamire; who so ardently admires this exertion of virtue, that he loves her, hideous as she is represented, still more than when she was most beautiful. Heaven, to be just to these two lovers, restores the beauty of Celidée; which is effected by a sympathetic powder. This romantic incident is thus explained. One of the French Princes (Celidon) when he returned from Italy, treated with coldness his amiable Princess (Celidée;) this was the effect of his violent

passion, which had now become jealousy. The coolness subsisted till the Prince was imprisoned, for state affairs, in the wood of Vincennes. The Princess, with the permission of the court, followed him into his confinement. This proof of her love, soon brought back the wandering heart and affections of the Prince. The small-pox seized her: which is the pointed diamond, and the dreadful disfigurement of her face. She was so fortunate as to escape being marked by this disease; which is meant by the sympathetic powder. Patru justly observes, that this trifling adventure is happily turned into a wonderful incident; that a wife should choose to be imprisoned with her husband is not singular; to escape being marked by the small-pox happens every day; but to romance, as he has done, on such common circumstances, is indeed most beautiful, most ingenious.

Patru says that D'Urfé, when a boy, was enamoured of Diana; this indeed has been disputed. It is certain that D'Urfé was sent to the island of Malta to enter into that order of knighthood; and in his absence she was married to Anne. What an affliction for Honoré on his return to see her married, and married to his brother! His affection did not diminish, but he concealed it in respectful silence. He had some knowledge of his brother's unhappi-

ness, and on this probably founded his hopes. After several years, during which the modest Diana had uttered no complaint, Anne declared himself; and shortly afterwards Honoré, as we have noticed, married Diana.

Our author has described the parties under this false appearance of marriage. He assumes the names of Celadon and Sylvander, and gives Diana those of Astrea and Diana. He is Sylvander and she Astrea while she is married to Anne; and he Celadon and she Diana when the marriage is dissolved. Sylvander is represented always as a lover who sighs secretly; nor does Diana declare her passion till overcome by the long sufferings of her faithful shepherd. For this reason Astrea and Diana, as well as Sylvander and Celadon, go together, prompted by the same despair, to the FOUNTAIN of the TRUTH OF LOVE.

Sylvander is called an unknown shepherd, who has no other wealth than his flock; because our author was the youngest of his family, or rather a knight of Malta, who possessed nothing but honour.

Celadon in despair throws himself into a river; this refers to his voyage to Malta. Under the name of Alexis he displays the friendship of Astrea for him, and those innocent freedoms which passed between them as relatives;

from this circumstance he has contrived a difficulty inimitably delicate.

Something of passion is to be discovered in these expressions of friendship. When Alexis assumes the name of Celadon, he calls that love which Astrea had only taken for fraternal affection. This was the trying moment. For though she loved him, she is rigorous in her duty and honour. She says, "what will they think of me if I unite myself to him, after permitting, for so many years, those familiarities which a brother may have taken with a sister with me, who knew that in fact I remained unmarried?"

How she got over this nice scruple does not appear; it was however for a long time a great obstacle to the felicity of our author. There is an incident which shews the purity of this married virgin, who was fearful the liberties she allowed Celadon might be ill construed. Phillis tells the druid Adamas, that Astrea was seen sleeping by the fountain of the Truth of Love, and that the unicorns which guarded those waters were observed to approach her, and lay their heads on her lap. As the fable says that it is one of the properties of these animals never to approach any female but a maiden, at this strange difficulty our druid remains surprized; while Astrea has thus given an incontrovertible proof of her purity.

The history of Philander is that of the elder D'Urfé. None but boys disguised as girls, and girls as boys, appear in the history. It was in this manner he concealed, without offending modesty, the defect of his brother. To mark the truth of this history, when Philander is disguised as a woman, while he converses with Astrea of his love, he frequently alludes to his misfortune, although in another sense.

Philander ready to expire, will die with the glorious name of the husband of Astrea. He intreats her to grant him this favour; she accords it to him, and swears before the Gods that she receives him in her heart for her husband. The truth is, he enjoyed nothing but the name. Philander dies too, in combating with a hideous Moor, which is the personification of his conscience, and which at length compelled him to quit so beautiful an object, and one so worthy of being eternally beloved.

The gratitude of Sylvander, on the point of being sacrificed, represents the consent of Honoré's parents to dissolve his vow of celibacy, and unite him to Diana; and the druid Adamas represents the ecclesiastical power. The FOUNTAIN of the TRUTH OF LOVE is that of marriage; the unicorns are the symbols of that purity which should ever guard it; and the flaming eyes of the lions, which are also there, repre-

sent those inconveniencies attending marriage, but over which a faithful passion easily triumphs.

In this manner has our author disguised his own private history; and blended in his works a number of little amours which passed at the court of Henry the Great. I might proceed in explaining these allegories; but what I have noticed will be sufficient to give an idea of the ingenuity of the author.

Fontenelle, in his introduction to his Eclogues, has made a pretty comparison of this species of pastoral romance with that of chivalry, which turned the brain of Don Quixote. When he reads the inimitable acts of Amadis, so many castles forced, giants hacked, magicians confounded, he does not regret that these are only fables; but he adds, when I read the ASTREA, where in a softened repose love occupies the minds of amiable heroes, where love decides on their fate, where wisdom itself preserves so little of its rigid air, that it becomes a zealous partizan of love, even to Adamas, the sovereign Druid, I then grieve that it is only a romance!

POETS LAUREAT.

THE present article is a sketch of the history of POETS LAUREAT, from a memoir of the French Academy, by the Abbé Resnel.

The custom of crowning poets is as ancient as poetry itself; it has indeed frequently varied; it existed, however, as late as the reign of Theodosius, when it was abolished as a remain of paganism.

When the barbarians overspread Europe, few appeared to merit this honour, and fewer who could have read their works. It was about the time of PETRARCH that POETRY resumed its ancient lustre; he was publicly honoured with the LAUREL CROWN. It was in this century (the thirteenth) that the establishment of Bachelor and Doctor was fixed in the universities. Those who were found worthy of the honour, obtained the *laurel of Bachelor*, or the *laurel of Doctor*; *Laurea Baccalaureatus*; *Laurea Doctoratus*. At their reception they not only assumed this *title*, but they also had a *crown of laurel* placed on their heads.

To this ceremony the ingenious writer attributes the revival of the custom. The *poets* were not slow in putting in their claims to what they had most a right; and their patrons sought to encourage them by these honourable distinctions.

The following *Formula* is the exact style of those which are yet employed in the unversities to confer the degree of Bachelor and Doctor; and serves to confirm the conjecture of Resnel.

"We, count and senator," (Count d'Anguillara, who bestowed the laurel on Petrarch) "for us and our College, declare FRANCIS PETRARCH, great poet and historian, and for a special mark of his quality of poet, we have placed with our hands on his head a *crown of laurel*, granting to him, by the tenor of these presents, and by the authority of King Robert, of the senate and the people of Rome, in the poetic, as well as in the historic art, and generally in whatever relates to the said arts, as well in this holy city as elsewhere, the free and entire power of reading, disputing, and interpreting all ancient books, to make new ones, and compose poems, which, God assisting, shall endure from age to age."

In Italy these honours did not long flourish; although TASSO dignified the laurel crown by his acceptance of it. Many got crowned who were unworthy of the distinction. The laurel was even bestowed on QUERNO, whose character is given in the Dunciad:

> "Not with more glee, by hands pontific crown'd
> With scarlet hats wide-waving circled round,
> Rome in her capitol saw *Querno* sit,
> Thron'd on seven hills, the Antichrist of wit."
>
> Canto II.

This man was made laureat, for the joke's sake; his poetry was inspired by his cups, a kind of

poet who came in with the dessert; and he recited twenty thousand verses. He was rather the *arch-buffoon* than the *arch-poet* to Leo X. though honoured with the latter title. They invented for him a new kind of laureated honour, and in the intermixture of the foliage raised to Apollo, slyly inserted the vine and the cabbage leaves, which he evidently deserved, from his extreme dexterity in clearing the pontiff's dishes and emptying his goblets.

Urban VIII. had a juster and more elevated idea of the children of Fancy. It appears that he possessed much poetic sensibility. Of him it is recorded, that he wrote a letter to Chiabrera to felicitate him on the success of his poetry: letters written by a pope were then an honour only paid to crowned heads. One is pleased also with another testimony of his elegant dispositions. Charmed with a poem which Bracciolini presented to him, he gave him the surname of DELLE-API, of the bees; which were the arms of this amiable pope. He, however, never crowned these favourite bards with the laurel, which, probably, he deemed unworthy of them.

In Germany the laureat honours flourished under the reign of Maximilian the First. He founded in 1504 a Poetical College at Vienna; reserving to himself and the regent the power

of bestowing the laurel. But the institution, notwithstanding this well-concerted scheme, fell into disrepute, owing to a crowd of claimants who were fired with the rage of versifying, and who, though destitute of poetic talents, had the laurel bestowed on them. Thus it became a prostituted honour; and satires were incessantly levelled against the usurpers of the crown of Apollo: it seems, notwithsanding, always to have had charms in the eyes of the Germans, who did not reflect, as the Abbé elegantly expresses himself, that it faded when it passed over so many heads.

The Emperor of Germany retains the laureatship in all its splendour. The selected bard is called *Il Poeta Cesareo.* APOSTOLO ZENO, as celebrated for his erudition as for his poetic powers, was succeeded by that most enchanting poet, METASTASIO.

The French never had a *Poet Laureat*, though they had *Regal Poets;* for none were ever solemnly crowned. The Spanish nation, always desirous of titles of honour, seem to have known the *Laureat;* but little information concerning it can be gathered from their authors.

Respecting our own country little can be said but what is mentioned by Selden. John Kay, who dedicated a History of Rhodes to Edward IV. takes the title of his *humble Poet Laureat.*

Gower and Chaucer were laureats; so was likewise the wretched Skelton to Henry VIII. In the Acts of Rymer, there is a charter of Henry VII. with the title of *pro Poeta Laureato.*

It does not appear that our poets were ever solemnly crowned as in other countries. Selden, after all his recondite researches, is satisfied with saying, that some trace of this distinction is to be found in our nation. It is, however, certain that our kings from time immemorial, have placed a miserable dependant in their household appointment, who was sometimes called the *King's poet*, and the *King's versificator.* It is probable that at length the selected bard assumed the title of *Poet Laureat*, without receiving the honours of the ceremony; or at the most, the *crown of laurel* was a mere obscure custom practised at our universities, and not attended with great public distinction. It was oftener placed on the skull of a Pedant than wreathed on the head of a man of genius.

ANGELO POLITIAN.

Angelo Politian, an Italian, was one of the most polished writers of the fifteenth century. Baillet has placed him amongst his celebrated children; for he was a writer at twelve years of

age. The Muses indeed cherished him in his cradle, and the Graces hung round it their most beautiful wreaths. When he became professor of the Greek language, such were the charms of his lectures, that one Chalcondylas, a native of Greece, saw himself abandoned by his pupils, who resorted to the delightful disquisitions of the elegant Politian. It has been acknowledged by critics of various nations that his poetical versions frequently excel the originals. This happy genius was lodged in a most unhappy form; nor were his morals untainted: it is only in his literary compositions that he appears perfect.

Monnoye, in his edition of the Menagiana, as a specimen of his Epistles, gives a translation of the letter, which serves as prefatory and dedicatory; and has accompanied it by a commentary. The letter (as he observes) is replete with literature, though void of pedantry; a barren subject is embellished by its happy turns. It is addressed to his patron Monsignor Pietro de Medicis; and was written about a month before the writer's death. Perhaps no author has so admirably defended himself from the incertitude of criticism and the fastidiousness of critics. His wit and his humour are delicate; and few compositions are sprinkled with such Attic salt,

MY LORD!

You have frequently urged me to collect my letters, to revise and to publish them in a volume. I have now gathered them, that I might not omit any mark of that obedience which I owe to him, on whom I rest all my hopes, and all my prosperity. I have not, however, collected them all, because that would have been a more laborious task, than to have gathered the scattered leaves of the Sibyl. It was never, indeed, with an intention of forming my letters into one body that I wrote them, but merely as occasion prompted, and as the subjects presented themselves without seeking for them. I never retained copies except of a few, which less fortunate, I think, than the others, were thus favoured for the sake of the verses they contained. To form, however, a sizeable volume, I have also inserted some written by others, but only those with which several ingenious scholars favoured me, and which, perhaps, may put the reader in good humour with my own.

There is one thing for which some will be inclined to censure me; the style of my letters is very unequal; and, to confess the truth, I did not find myself always in the same humour, and the same modes of expression were not adapted to every person and every topic. They will not fail then to observe, when they read such a

diversity of letters (I mean if they do read them) that I have composed not epistles, but (once more) miscellanies.

I hope, my Lord, notwithstanding this, that amongst such a variety of opinions, of those who write letters, and of those who give precepts how letters should be written, I shall find some apology. Some, probably, will deny that they are Ciceronian. I can answer such, and not without good authority, that in epistolary composition we must not regard Cicero as a model. Another perhaps will say, that I imitate Cicero. And him I will answer by observing, that I wish nothing better than to be capable of grasping something of this great man, were it but his shade.

Another will wish that I had borrowed a little from the manner of Pliny the orator, because his profound sense and accuracy were greatly esteemed. I shall oppose him by expressing my contempt of all the writers of the age of Pliny. If it should be observed, that I have imitated the manner of Pliny, I shall then screen myself by what Sidonius Apollinaris, an author who is by no means disreputable, says in commendation of his epistolary style. Do I resemble Symmachus? I shall not be sorry, for they distinguish his openness and conciseness. Am I considered in no wise resembling him? I shall

confess that I am not pleased with his dry manner.

Will my letters be condemned for their length? Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, and Cicero, have all written long ones. Will some of them be criticised for their brevity? I allege in my favour the examples of Dion, Brutus, Apollonius Philostratus, Marcus Antoninus, Alciphron, Julian, Symmachus, and also Lucian, who vulgarly, but falsely, is believed to have been Phalaris.

I shall be censured for having treated of topics which are not generally considered as proper for epistolary composition. I admit this censure, provided while I am condemned, Seneca is also condemned. Another will not allow of a sententious manner in my letters; I will still justify myself by Seneca. Another, on the contrary, desires abrupt sententious periods; Dionysius shall answer him for me, who maintains, that pointed sentences should not be admitted into letters.

Is my style too perspicuous? It is precisely that which Philostratus admires. Is it obscure? Such is that of Cicero to Atticus. Negligent? An agreeable negligence in letters is more graceful than elaborate ornaments. Laboured? Nothing can be more proper, since we send epistles to our friends as a kind of presents. If

they display too nice an arrangement, the Halicarnassian shall vindicate me. If there is none; Artemon says there should be none.

Now as a good and pure Latinity has its peculiar taste, its manners, and (to express myself thus) its Atticisms; if in this sense a letter shall be found not sufficiently Attic, so much the better; for what was Herod the sophist censured? but that having been born an Athenian, he affected too much to appear one in his language. Should a letter seem too Attical; still better, since it was by discovering Theophrastus, who was no Athenian, that a good old woman of Athens laid hold of a word, and shamed him.

Shall one letter be found not sufficiently serious? I love to jest. Or is it too grave? I am pleased with gravity. Is another full of figures? Letters being the images of discourse, figures have the effect of graceful action in conversation. Are they deficient in figures? This is just what characterises a letter, this want of figures. Does it discover the genius of the writer? This frankness is recommended. Does it conceal it? The writer did not think proper to paint himself; and it is one requisite in a letter, that it should be void of ostentation. You express yourself, some one will observe, in common terms on common topics, and in new

terms on new topics. The style is thus adapted to the subject. No, no, he will answer; it is in common terms you express new ideas, and in new terms common ideas. Very well! It is because I have not forgotten an ancient Greek precept which expressly recommends this.

It is thus by attempting to be ambidextrous I try to ward off attacks. My critics will however criticise me as they please. It will be sufficient for me, my Lord, to be assured of having satisfied you, by my letters, if they are good; or by my obedience, if they are not so.

Florence, 1494.

ORIGINAL LETTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

In the Cottonian Library, Vespasian, F. III. is preserved a letter written by Queen Elizabeth (then Princess) to her sister Queen Mary. It appears by this epistle that Mary had desired to have her picture; and in gratifying the wishes of her Majesty, Elizabeth accompanies the present with the following elaborate Letter. It bears no date of the *year* in which it was written; but her place of residence is marked to be at Hatfield. There she had retired to enjoy the silent pleasures of a studious life, and to be

distant from the dangerous politics of the time. When Mary died Elizabeth was at Hatfield; the Letter must have been written shortly before this circumstance took place. She was at the time of its composition in habitual intercourse with the most excellent writers of Antiquity; her Letter displays this in every part of it; it is polished and repolished. It has also the merit of now being now first published.

LETTER.

"Like as the riche man that dayly gathereth riches to riches, and to one bag of money layeth a greate sort til it come to infinit, so me thinkes, your Majestie not beinge suffised with many benefits and gentilnes shewed to me afore this time, dothe now increase them in askinge and desiring wher you may bid and comaunde, requiring a thinge not worthy the desiringe for it selfe, but made worthy for your highness request. My pictur I mene, in wiche if the inward good mynde towarde your grace might as wel be declared as the outwarde face and countenance shal be seen, I wold nor haue taried the comandement but prevent it, nor haue bine the last to graunt but the first to offer it. For the face, I graunt, I might wel blusche to offer, but the mynde I shall neur be ashamed to present. For thogth from the grace of the pictur,

the coulers may fade by time, may giue by wether, may be spotted by chance, yet the other nor time with her swift winges shall ouertake, nor the mistie cloudes with ther loweringes may darken, nor chance with her slipery fote may overthrow. Of this althogth yet the profe could not be greate because the occasions hathe bine but smal, notwithstandinge as a dog hathe a day, so may I perchaunce haue time to declare it in dides wher now I do write them but in wordes. And further I shal most humbly beseche your Maiestie that whan you shal loke on my pictur you wil witsafe to thinke that as you haue but the outwarde shadow of the body afore you, so my inward minde wischeth, that the body it selfe wer oftner in your presence; howbeit bicause bothe my so beinge I thinke coulde do your Maiestie litel pleasure thogth my selfe great good, and againe bicause I se as yet not the time agreing therũto, I shal lerne to folow this sainge of Orace, Feras non culpes quod vitari non potest. And thus I wil (troblinge your Maiestie I fere) ende with my most humble thankes, besechinge God longe to preserue you to liis honour to your cõfort, to the realmes profit, and to my joy. From Hatfilde this day of May.

Your Maiesties most humbly Sistar and Seruante.

ELIZABETH.

ANNE BULLEN.

EVERY particular relating to eminent persons in our own history, interests the reflecting mind. One can hardly be too minute, though an unskilful writer may frequently become prolix. That minute detail of circumstances frequently found in writers of the History of their own times is far more interesting than the elegant and general narratives of later, and probably of more philosophical Historians. It is in the artless recitals of memoir-writers, that the imagination is struck with a lively impression, and fastens on petty circumstances which must be passed over by the classical Historian. The writings of Brantome, Comines, Froissart, and others, are dictated by their natural feelings: while the passions of modern writers cannot but be artificial; too temperate with dispassionate philosophy, or inflamed with the virulence of faction. In a word, History instructs, but Memoirs delight. These prefatory observations may serve as an apology for the following Anecdotes, which are gathered from obscure corners, on which the dignity of the Historian must not dwell.

In Houssaie's *Memoires*, Vol. I. p. 435, a little circumstance is recorded concerning the decapitation of the unfortunate Anne Bullen,

which illustrates an observation of Hume. Our Historian notices that her executioner was a Frenchman of Calais, who was supposed to have uncommon skill; it is probable that the following incident might have been preserved by tradition in France, from the account of the executioner himself.—Anne Bullen being on the scaffold, would not consent to have her eyes covered with a bandage, saying, that she had no fear of death. All that the Divine who assisted at her execution could obtain from her, was, that she would shut her eyes. But as she was opening them at every moment, the executioner could not bear their tender and mild glances; fearful of missing his aim, he was obliged to invent an expedient to behead the Queen. He drew off his shoes, and approached her silently; while he was at her left hand, another person advanced at her right, who made a great noise in walking, so that this circumstance drawing the attention of Anne, she turned her face from the executioner, who was enabled by this artifice to strike the fatal blow, without being disarmed by that spirit of affecting resignation which shone in the eyes of the lovely Anne Bullen.

"The Common Executioner,
Whose heart th' accustomed sight of death makes hard,
Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck
But first begs pardon." SHAKSPEARE.

JAMES I.

It was usual, in the reign of James the First, when they compared it with the preceding glorious one, to distinguish him by the title of *Queen James*, and his illustrious predecessor by that of *King Elizabeth!* Sir Anthony Weldon informs us, "that when James the First sent Sir Roger Aston as his messenger to Elizabeth, Sir Roger was always placed in the lobby: the hangings being turned so that he might see the Queen dancing to a little fiddle, which was to no other end than that he should tell his master, by her youthful disposition, how likely he was to come to the crown he so much thirsted after;"—and indeed, when at her death this same knight, whose origin was low, and whose language was suitable to that origin, appeared before the English council, he could not conceal his Scottish rapture, for, asked how the King did? he replied, "even my lords, like a poore man wandering about forty years in a wildernesse and barren soyle, and now arrived at the *Land of Promise.*" A curious anecdote, respecting the economy of the court in these reigns, is noticed in some manuscript memoirs written in James's reign, preserved in a family of distinction. The lady, who wrote these memoirs, tells us that a

great change had taken place in *cleanliness*, since the last reign; for having rose from her chair, she found, on her departure, that she had the honour of carrying *upon* her some companions who must have been inhabitants of the palace. The court of Elizabeth was celebrated occasionally for its magnificence, and always for its nicety. James was singularly effeminate; he could not behold a drawn sword without shuddering; was much too partial to handsome men; and appears to merit the bitter satire of Churchill. If wanting other proofs, we should only read the second volume of "Royal Letters," 6987, in the Harleian collections, which contains Stenie's correspondence with James. The gross familiarity of Buckingham's address is couched in such terms as these:—he calls his Majesty "Dere dad and Gossope!" and concludes his letters with "your humble slaue and dogge, Stenie." He was a most weak, but not quite a vicious man; yet his expertness in the art of dissimulation was very great indeed. He called this *King-Craft*. Sir Anthony Weldon gives a lively anecdote of this dissimulation in the King's behaviour to the Earl of Somerset at the very moment he had prepared to disgrace him. The Earl accompanied the King to Royston, and, to his apprehension, never parted from him with more seeming affection, though the King well

knew he should never see him more. The Earl when he kissed his hand, the King hung about his neck, slabbering his cheeks, saying, —for God's sake, when shall I see thee again? On my soul I shall neither eat nor sleep until you come again. The Earl told him on Monday (this being on the Friday). For God's sake let me, said the King:—Shall I, shall I?—then lolled about his neck;—then for God's sake give thy Lady this kisse for me, in the same manner at the stayre's head, at the middle of the stayres, and at the stayre's foot. The Earl was not in his coach when the King used these very words (in the hearing of four servants, one of whom reported it instantly to the author of this history), "I shall never see his face more."

He displayed great imbecility in his amusements, which are characterised by the following one, related by Arthur Wilson.—When James became melancholy in consequence of various disappointments in state matters, Buckingham and his mother used several means of diverting him. Amongst the most ludicrous was the present.—They had a young lady, who brought a pig in the dress of a new-born infant; the Countess carried it to the King, wrapped in a rich mantle. One Turpin, on this occasion, was dressed like a Bishop in all his pontifical or-

naments. He began the rites of baptism with the common prayer book in his hand; a silver ewer with water was held by another. The Marquis stood as godfather. When James turned to look at the infant, the pig squeaked; an animal which he greatly abhorred. At this, highly displeased, he exclaimed,—"Out! Away for shame! What blasphemy is this!"

This ridiculous joke did not accord with the feelings of James at that moment; he was not "i' th' vein." Yet we may observe, that had not such artful politicians as Buckingham and his mother been strongly persuaded of the success of this puerile fancy, they would not have ventured on such "blasphemies." They certainly had witnessed amusements heretofore not less trivial, which had gratified his Majesty. The account which Sir Anthony Weldon gives in his Court of King James, exhibits a curious scene of James's amusements. "After the King supped, he would come forth to see pastimes and fooleries; in which Sir Ed. Zouch, Sir George Goring, and Sir John Finit, were the chiefe and Master Fools, and surely this fooling got them more than any others' wisdome; Zouch's part was to sing bawdy songs, and tell bawdy tales, Finit's to compose these songs; there was a set of Fiddlers brought to court on purpose for this fooling, and Goring

was master of the game for Fooleries, sometimes presenting David Droman and Archee Armstrong, the Kinge's foole, on the back of the other Fools, to tilt one at another, till they fell together by the eares; sometimes they performed antick dances. But Sir John Millicent (who was never known before) was commended for notable fooling; and was indeed the best *extemporary foole* of them all." The "Court of James" is a kind of scandalous chronicle of the times.

His dispositions were, however, generally grave and studious. He seems to have possessed a real love of letters, but attended with that mediocrity of talent which in a private person had never raised him into notice. "While there was a chance," writes the author of the Catalogue of Noble Authors, "that the dyer's son, Vorstius, might be divinity-professor at Leyden, instead of being burnt, as his Majesty hinted *to the Christian prudence* of the Dutch that he deserved to be, our ambassadors could not receive instructions, and consequently could not treat, on any other business. The King, who did not resent the massacre at Amboyna, was on the point of breaking with the States for supporting a man who professed the heresies of Enjedius, Ostodorus, &c. points of extreme consequence to Great Britain!" Sir Dudley Carleton

was forced to threaten the Dutch, not only with the hatred of King James, but also with his pen.

This royal pedant is forcibly characterised by the following observations of the same writer:

"Among his Majesty's works is a small collection of poetry. Like several of his subjects, our royal author has condescended to apologize for its imperfections, as having been written in his youth, and his maturer age being otherwise occupied. So that (to employ his own language) when his ingyne and age could, his affaires and fascherie would not permit him to correct them, scarslie but at stolen moments, he having the leasure to blenk upon any paper." When James sent a present of his harangues turned into Latin to the protestant Princes in Europe, it is not unentertaining to observe in their answers of compliments and thanks, how each endeavoured to insinuate that he has read them, without positively asserting it! Buchanan, when asked how he came to make a pedant of his royal pupil, answered, that it was the best he could make of him. Sir George Mackenzie relates a story of his tutelage, which shews Buchanan's humour, and the veneration of others for royalty. The young King being one day at play with his fellow pupil, the master of Erskine, Buchanan was reading, and desired them to

make less noise. As they disregarded his admonition, he told his Majesty, if he did not hold his tongue, he would certainly whip his breech. The King replied, he would be glad to see who would *bell the cat*, alluding to the fable. Buchanan lost his temper, and throwing his book from him, gave his Majesty a sound flogging. The old Countess of Mar rushed into the room, and taking the King in her arms, asked how he dared to lay his hands on the Lord's anointed? Madam, replied the elegant and immortal Historian, I have whipped his a——, you may kiss it if you please!

James I. was certainly a zealous votary of literature; his wish was sincere, when at viewing the Bodleian Library at Oxford, he exclaimed, "were I not a King I would be an university man; and if it were so that I must be a prisoner, if I might have my wish, I would have no other prison than this library, and be chained together with these good authors."

Hume has informed us, that "his death was decent." The following are the minute particulars; I have drawn them from an imperfect manuscript collection, made by the celebrated Sir Thomas Browne.

"The Lord Keeper, on March 22, received a letter from the Court, that it was feared his Majesty's sickness was dangerous to death;

which fear was more confirmed, for he meeting Dr. Harvey in the road, was told by him that the King used to have a beneficial evacuation of nature, a sweating in his left arm, as helpful to him as any fontanel could be, which of late failed.

" When the Lord Keeper presented himself before him, he moved to chearful discourse, but it would not do. He staid by his bed-side until midnight. Upon the consultations of the physicians in the morning he was out of comfort, and by the Prince's leave told him, kneeling by his pallet, that his days to come would be but few in this world—*I am satisfied*, said the King; but pray you assist me to make me ready for the next world, to go away hence for Christ, whose mercies I call for, and hope to find.

" From that time the Keeper never left him, or put off his cloaths to go to bed. The King took the communion, and professed he died in the bosom of the Church of England, whose doctrine he had defended with his pen, being persuaded it was according to the mind of Christ, as he should shortly answer it before him.

" He staid in the chamber to take notice of every thing the King said, and to repulse those who crept much about the chamber door, and into the chamber; they were for the most addicted to the Church of Rome. Being rid of

them he continued in prayer, while the king lingered on, and at last *shut his eyes with his own hands.*"

Thus in the full power of his faculties, a timorous Prince encountered the horrors of dissolution. *Religion* rendered chearful the abrupt night of futurity; and what can *philosophy* do more, or rather can philosophy do as much? *Montaigne* and *la Fontaine*, who wrote very philosophically on *death*, did not *die* like philosophers. The first raised himself, when expiring, with fervent devotion to the host! And the other, after his death, had on a hair shirt!

I proposed to have examined with some care the works of James I.—but that uninviting task has been now postponed till it is too late. As a writer his works may not be valuable, and are infected with the pedantry and the superstition of the age; yet I suspect that James was not that degraded and feeble character in which he ranks by the contagious voice of criticism. He has had more critics than readers. After a great number of acute observations and witty allusions, made extempore, which we find continually recorded of him by contemporary writers, and some not friendly to him, I conclude that he possessed a great facility and promptness of wit, and much solid judgment and acute ingenuity. It requires only a little labour to

prove this. That labour I have since zealously performed. This article, composed twenty years ago, displays the effects of first impressions and popular clamours. The character of James I. has suffered from a variety of causes. That monarch preserved for us a peace of more than twenty years; and his talents were of a higher order than the calumnies of the party who degraded him allowed a common inquirer to discover. For the rest I must refer the reader to an "An Inquiry into the Literary and Political Character of James I."

GENERAL MONK AND HIS WIFE.

From the same MS. collection I shall rescue another anecdote, which has a tendency to shew that it is not advisable to permit ladies to remain at home, when political plots are to be secretly discussed. And while it displays the treachery of Monk's wife, it will also appear that, like other great revolutionists, it was ambition that first induced him to become the reformer he pretended to be.

"Monk gave fair promises to the Rump, but last agreed with the French Ambassador to take the government on himself; by whom he had a promise from Mazarin of assistance from France.

This bargain was struck late at night; but not so secretly but that Monk's wife, who had posted herself conveniently behind the hangings, finding what was resolved upon, sent her brother Clarges away immediately with notice of it to Sir A. A. She had promised to watch her husband, and inform Sir. A. how matters went. Sir A. caused the Council of State, whereof he was a member, to be summoned, and charged Monk that he was playing false. The general insisted that he was true to his principles, and firm to what he had promised, and that he was ready to give them all satisfaction. Sir A. told him if he were sincere he might remove all scruples, and should instantly take away their commissions from such and such men in his army, and appoint others, and that before he left the room. Monk consented; a great part of the commissions of his officers were changed, and Sir Edward Harley, a member of the council, and then present, was made governor of Dunkirk in the room of Sir William Lockhart; the army ceased to be at Monk's devotion; the ambassador was recalled, and broke his heart."

Such were the effects of the infidelity of the wife of general Monk!

PHILIP AND MARY.

HOUSSAIE in his Memoires, vol. i. p. 261, has given the following curious particulars of this singular union.

" The second wife of Philip was Mary Queen of England; a virtuous princess (Houssaie was a good catholic), but who had neither youth nor beauty. This marriage was as little happy for the one as for the other. The husband did not like his wife, although she doted on him; and the English hated Philip still more than he hated them. Silhon says, that the rigour which he exercised in England against heretics, partly hindered Prince Carlos from succeeding to that crown, and for *which purpose* Mary had invited him in case she died childless!—But no historian speaks of this pretended inclination, and is it probable that Mary ever thought proper to call to the succession of the English throne the son of the Spanish Monarch? This marriage had made her nation detest her, and in the last years of her life she could be little satisfied with him from his marked indifference for her. She well knew that the Parliament would never consent to exclude her sister Elizabeth, whom the nobility loved for being more friendly to

the new religion, and more hostile to the house of Austria."

In the Cottonian library, Vespasian F. III. is preserved a note of instructions in the handwriting of Queen Mary, of which the following is a copy. It was, probably, written when Philip was just seated on the English throne.

"Instructions for my lorde Previsel.

"Firste, to tell the Kinge the whole state of this realme, w^t^ all thyngs appartaynyng to the same, as myche as ye knowe to be trewe.

"Seconde, to obey his comandment in all thyngs."

"Thyrdly, in all things he shall aske your aduyse to declare your opinion as becometh a faythfull conceyllour to do.

Marye the Quene."

Houssaie proceeds. "After the death of Mary, Philip sought Elizabeth in marriage; and she, who was yet unfixed at the beginning of her reign, amused him at first with hopes. But as soon as she unmasked herself to the Pope, she laughed at Philip, telling the Duke of Feria, his ambassador, that her conscience would not permit her to marry the husband of her sister."

This monarch, however, had no such scruples. Incest appears to have had in his eyes peculiar charms; for he offered himself three times to

three different sisters-in-law. He seems also to have known the secret of getting quit of his wives when they became inconvenient. In state matters he spared no one whom he feared; to them he sacrificed his only son, his brother, and a great number of princes and ministers."

It is said of Philip, that before he died he advised his son to make peace with England, and war with the other powers. *Pacem cum Anglo, bellum cum reliquis.* Queen Elizabeth, and the ruin of his invincible fleet, physicked his phrenzy into health, and taught him to fear and respect that country which he thought he could have made a province of Spain!

On his death-bed he did every thing he could for *salvation.* The following protestation, a curious morsel of bigotry, he sent to his confessor a few days before he died.

"Father confessor! as you occupy the place of God, I protest to you, that I will do every thing you shall say to be necessary for my being saved; so that what I omit doing will be placed to your account, as I am ready to acquit myself of all that shall be ordered to me."

Is there in the records of history a more glaring instance of the idea which a good Catholic attaches to the power of a confessor than the present authentic example? The most licentious philosophy seems not more dangerous

than a religion whose votary believes that the accumulation of crimes can be dissipated by the breath of a few orisons, and which, considering a venal priest to "occupy the place of God," can traffic with the divine power at a very moderate price.

After his death a Spanish grandee wrote with a coal on the chimney-piece of his chamber the following epitaph, which ingeniously paints his character in four verses.

Siendo moço, luxurioso;
Siendo hombre, fue cruel;
Siendo viejo, codicioso;
Que se puede esperar del?

In youth he was luxurious;
In manhood he was cruel;
In old age he was avaricious;
What could be hoped from him?

CHARLES THE FIRST.

Of his romantic excursion into Spain for the Infanta, there are many curious particulars. Some observations, and some anecdotes are scattered amongst foreign writers; they will display the superstitious prejudices which prevailed on this occasion, and, perhaps, develope the mysterious politics of the courts of Spain and Rome.

Cardinal Gaetano, who had long been nuncio in Spain, observes, that the people, accustomed to revere the inquisition as the oracle of divinity, abhorred that proposal of marriage of the Infanta with an heretical Prince; but that the King's council, and all wise politicians, were desirous of its accomplishment. Gregory XV. held a consultation of cardinals, where it was agreed that the just apprehension which the English catholics entertained of being more cruelly persecuted, if this marriage failed, was a sufficient reason to justify the Pope. The dispensation was therefore immediately granted, and sent to the nuncio of Spain, with orders to inform the Prince of Wales, in case of rupture, that no impediment of the marriage proceeded from the court of Rome, who, on the contrary, had expedited the dispensation.

The Prince's excursion to Madrid was, however, universally blamed, as being inimical to state-interests. Nani, author of a history of Venice, which, according to his digressive manner, is the universal history of his times, has noticed this affair. "The people talked, and the English murmured more than any other nation to see the only son of the King and heir of his realms, venture on so long a voyage, and present himself rather as a hostage than a husband to a foreign court, which so widely differed

in government and religion, to obtain by force of prayer and supplications a woman whom Philip and his ministers made a point of honour and conscience to refuse."

Houssaie observes, "The English council were against it, but King James obstinately resolved on it; being over persuaded by Gondomar, the Spanish Ambassador, whose facetious humour and lively repartees greatly delighted him. Gondomar persuaded him that the presence of the Prince would not fail of accomplishing this union, and also the restitution of the electorate to his son-in-law the Palatine. Add to this the Earl of Bristol, the English ambassador extraordinary at the court of Madrid, finding it his interest, wrote repeatedly to his Majesty that the success was certain if the Prince came there, for that the Infanta would be charmed with his personal appearance and polished manners. It was thus that James, seduced by these two ambassadors, and by his parental affection for both his children, permitted the Prince of Wales to travel into Spain." This account differs from Clarendon.

Wicquefort says, " that James in all this was the dupe of Gondomar, who well knew the impossibility of this marriage, which was alike inimical to the interests of politics and the Inquisition. For a long time he amused his Majesty

with hopes, and even got money for the household expences of the future Queen. He acted his part so well, that the King of Spain recompensed the knave, on his return, with a seat in the council of state." There is preserved in the British Museum a considerable series of letters which passed between James I. and the Duke of Buckingham and Charles, during their residence in Spain.

I shall glean some further particulars concerning this mysterious affair from two English contemporaries, Howel and Wilson, who wrote from their own observations. Howel had been employed in this projected match, and resided during its negociation at Madrid.

Howel describes the first interview of Prince Charles and the Infanta. He says, "The Infanta wore a blue ribband about her arm, that the Prince might distinguish her, and as soon as she saw the Prince her colour rose very high."—Wilson informs us that "two days after their interview the Prince was invited to run at the ring, where his fair mistress was a spectator, and to the glory of his fortune, and the great contentment both of himself and the lookers on, he took the ring the very first course." Howel, writing from Madrid, says "The people here do mightily magnify the gallantry of the journey, and cry out that he deserved to have the

Infanta thrown into his arms the first night he came." The people appear, however, some time after to doubt if the English had any religion at all. Again, "I have seen the Prince have his eyes immoveably fixed upon the Infanta half an hour together in a thoughtful speculative posture." Olivares, who was no friend to this match, coarsely observed that the Prince watched her as a cat does a mouse. Charles indeed acted every thing that a lover in one of the old romances could have done. He once leapt over the walls of her garden, and only retired by the intreaties of the old Marquis who then guarded her, and who, falling on his knees, solemnly protested that if the Prince spoke to her his head would answer for it. He watched hours in the street to meet with her; and Wilson says he gave such liberal presents to the court, as well as Buckingham to the Spanish beauties, that the Lord Treasurer Middlesex complained repeatedly of their wasteful prodigality.

Let us now observe by what mode this match was consented to by the courts of Spain and Rome. Wilson informs us that Charles agreed "That any one should freely propose to *him* the arguments in favour of the Catholic religion, without giving any impediment; but that he would never, directly or indirectly, permit any one to speak to the *Infanta* against the same."

They probably had tampered with Charles concerning his religion. A letter of Gregory XV. to him, is preserved in Wilson's life. Olivares said to Buckingham, you gave me some assurance and hope of the Prince's *turning Catholic.* The Duke roundly answered that it was false. The Spanish minister confounded at the bluntness of our English duke, broke from him in a violent rage, and lamented that state matters would not suffer him to do himself justice. This insult was never forgiven; and some time afterwards he attempted to revenge himself on Buckingham, by endeavouring to persuade James that he was at the head of a conspiracy against him.

We hasten to conclude these anecdotes not to be found in the pages of Hume and Smollett. —Wilson says that both kingdoms rejoiced.— "Preparations were made in England to entertain the Infanta; a new church was built at St. James's, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Spanish Ambassador, for the public exercise of her religion; her portrait was multiplied in every corner of the town; such as hoped to flourish under her eye, suddenly began to be powerful. In Spain (as Wilson quaintly expresses himself) the substance was as much courted as the shadow here. Indeed the Infanta, Howel tells us, was applying hard to the

English language, and was already called the Princess of England. To conclude,—Charles complained of the repeated delays; and he, and the Spanish court, parted with a thousand civilities. The Infanta however observed, that had the Prince loved her, he would not have quitted her."

How shall we dispel those clouds of mystery with which politics have covered this strange transaction? It appears that James had in view the restoration of the Palatinate to his daughter, whom he could not effectually assist; that the court of Rome had speculations of the most dangerous tendency to the Protestant Religion: that the marriage was broken off by that personal hatred which existed between Olivares and Buckingham; and that, if there was any sincerity existing between the parties concerned, it rested with the Prince and the Infanta, who were both youthful and romantic, and were but two beautiful ivory balls in the hands of great players.

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

The Duke of Buckingham, in his impudent, wild, and familiar manner, appears to have been equally a favourite with James I. and

Charles I. He behaved with singular indiscretion both at the courts of France and Spain.

Various anecdotes might be collected from the memoir writers of those countries, to convince us that our court was always little respected by its ill choice of this ambassador. His character is hit off by one master-stroke from the pencil of Hume; " He had," says this penetrating observer of men, " English familiarity and French levity;" so that he was in full possession of two of the most offensive qualities an ambassador can possess.

Sir Henry Wotton has written an interesting life of our Duke. At school his character fully discovered itself, even at that early period of life. He would not apply to any serious studies, but excelled in those lighter qualifications adapted to please in the world. He was a graceful horseman, musician, and dancer. His mother withdrew him from school at the early age of thirteen, and he soon became a domestic favourite. 'Her fondness permitted him to indulge in every caprice, and to cultivate those agreeable talents which were natural to him. His person was beautiful, and his manners insinuating. In a word, he was adapted to become a courtier. The fortunate opportunity soon presented itself; for James saw him, and invited him to court, and showered on him,

with a prodigal hand, the cornucopia of royal patronage.

Houssaie, in his political memoirs, has detailed an anecdote of this Duke, only known to the English reader in the general observation of the historian. When he was sent to France, to conduct the Princess Henrietta to the arms of Charles I. he had the insolence to converse with the Queen of France, not as an ambassador, but as a lover! The Marchioness of Senecey, her lady of honour, enraged at seeing this conversation continue, seated herself in the arm-chair of the Queen, who that day was confined to her bed; she did this to hinder the insolent Duke from approaching the Queen, and probably taking other liberties. As she observed that he still persisted in the lover, "Sir, (she said, in a severe tone of voice,) you must learn to be silent; it is not thus we address the Queen of France."

This audacity of the Duke is further confirmed by Nani, in his sixth book of the History of Venice; an historian who is not apt to take things lightly. For when Buckingham was desirous of once more being ambassador at that court, in 1626, is was signified by the French ambassador, that for reasons *well known to himself*, his person would not be agreeable to his most Christian Majesty. In a romantic threat,

the Duke exclaimed, he would go and see the Queen in spite of the French court: and to this petty affair is to be ascribed the war between the two nations!

The Marshal de Bassompierre, in the journal of his life, affords another instance of his "English familiarity." He says, "The King of England gave me a long audience, and a very disputatious one. He put himself in a passion, while I, without losing my respect, expressed myself freely. The Duke of Buckingham, when he observed the King and myself very warm, leapt suddenly betwixt his Majesty and me, exclaiming, I am come to set all to rights betwixt you, which I think is high time."

Cardinal Richelieu hated Buckingham as sincerely as did the Spaniard Olivares. This enmity is said to be owing to the Cardinal writing to the Duke without leaving any space open after the title of Monsieur; the Duke, to shew his equality, returned his answer in the same "paper-sparing" manner. From such petty circumstances many wars have taken their source.

This ridiculous circumstance between Richelieu and Buckingham, reminds me of a similar one, which happened to two Spanish Lords:—One signed at the end of his letter, EL *Marques* (THE *Marquis)* as if the title had been peculiar to himself for its excellence. His national va-

nity received a dreadful reproof from his correspondent, who, jealous of his equality, signed OTRO *Marques* (ANOTHER *Marquis.)*

An anecdote given by Sir Henry Wotton offers a characteristic trait of Charles and his favourite:—

" They were now entered into the deep time of Lent, and could get no flesh into their inns; whereupon fell out a pleasant passage (if I may insert it by the way among more serious):—There was near Bayon a herd of goats with their young ones; on which sight Sir Richard Graham (master of the horse to the Marquis) tells the Marquis he could snap one of the kids, and make some shift to carry him close to their lodgings; which the Prince overhearing, " Why Richard," says he, " do you think you may practice here your old tricks again upon the borders." Upon which word they first gave the goat-herd good contentment, and then while the Marquis and his servants being both on foot, were chasing the kid about the flock, the Prince from horseback killed him in the head with a Scottish pistol. Let this serve for a journal parenthesis, which yet may shew how his highness, even in such light and sportful damage, had a noble sense of just dealing."

THE DEATH OF CHARLES IX.

Dr. Cayet is an old French controversial writer, but is better known in French literature as an historian. His *Chronologie Novenaire* is full of anecdotes unknown to other writers. He collected them from his own observations, for he was under-preceptor to Henry IV. The dreadful massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in the reign of Charles IX.; on which occasion the English court went into mourning. The singular death of Charles has been regarded by the Huguenots as an interposition of Divine justice: he died bathed in his blood, which burst from his veins. The horrors of this miserable Prince on his dying bed are forcibly depicted by the anecdotes I am now collecting. I shall premise, however, that Charles was a mere instrument in the hand of his mother, the political and cruel Catherine of Medicis.

Dr. Cayet, with honest *naïveté*, thus relates what he knew to have passed a few hours before his death.

"King Charles, feeling himself near his end, after having passed some time without pronouncing a word, said, as he turned himself on one side, and as if he seemed to awake, "Call

my brother!" The Queen mother was present, who immediately sent for the Duke of Alençon (who was afterwards Henry III.) The King perceiving him, turned his back and again said, "Let my brother come." The Queen his mother replied, "Sir, I do not know whom you mean; here is your brother." The King was displeased, and said, "Let them bring my brother the King of Navarre; it is he who is my brother." The Queen mother observing the dying monarch's resolute order, sent for him; but, for reasons known only to herself, she commanded the captain of the guards to conduct him under the vaults. They went to the King of Navarre, and desired him to come and speak to the King; at that moment, this Prince has since repeatedly said, he felt a shuddering and apprehension of death so much that he would not go. But King Charles persisting on his coming, the Queen mother assured him that he should receive no injury. In this promise, however, he put little trust. He went, accompanied by the Viscount D'Auchy, on whose word he chiefly relied. Having however observed under these vaults a great number of halberdiers and arquebusiers in ranks, he would have returned, when the Viscount and the captain re-assured him that no harm should happen to him. The soldiers bowed, and their behaviour was respectful;

by a private staircase he entered the chamber of the King, who, immediately on perceiving him turned towards him and stretched out his arms. The King of Navarre was affected; he sighed and wept, and fell on his knees at the side of the bed. Charles embraced, and having kissed him, said, "My brother, you lose a good master and a good friend. I know it is not you who occasions me so much trouble; had I believed what they said, you would not have been alive; but I have always loved you. It is to you alone I trust my wife and daughter; earnestly do I recommend them to your care. *Do not trust the Queen;* but God protect you!"

The Queen mother here interrupted him, "Ah, Sir! do not say that!"—"Yes, madam, I must say it; it is the truth. Believe me, my brother; love me; assist my wife and daughter, and implore God for mercy on me. Adieu, my brother, adieu."—The King of Navarre remained till his majesty expired.

The following minute particulars are drawn from the journal of Pierre de L'Etoille. In the simplicity of his narration, so pleasing in the old writers, the *nurse* and the *monarch;* the religious remorse of the one, and the artless consolations of the other, become interesting objects.

"King Charles, two days before his death,

having called for Mazzille his chief physician, and complaining of the pains he suffered, asked him if it was not possible that he, and so many other celebrated physicians that were in his realms, could give some alleviation to his disorder; "for I am," said he, "cruelly and horridly tormented." To which Mazzille replied, that whatever had depended on them had been tried, but that in truth God only could be the sovereign physician in such complaints. I believe, said the king, that what you say is true, and that you know nothing else. Draw from me my *custode* (or large cap) that I may try to rest. Mazzille withdrew, and left orders that all should leave the king except three, viz. La Tour, St. Pris, and his nurse, whom his Majesty greatly loved, *although she was a Huguenot.* As she had just seated herself on a coffer and began to doze, she heard the King groan bitterly, weeping and sighing; she then approached the bed softly, and drawing away his *custode,* the King said to her, giving vent to a heavy sigh, and shedding tears plentifully, in so much that they interrupted his discourse—Ah! my dear nurse! my beloved woman, what blood! what murders! Ah! I have followed wicked advice! O my God! pardon me, and be merciful. I know not where I am, they have made me so perplexed and agitated. How will all

this end? what shall I do? I am lost for ever! I know it.—Then the nurse thus addressed him; Sire! be the murders on those who forced you to order them; your majesty could not help it, and since you never consented, and now regret them, believe, God will never impute them to you, and will cover them with the mantle of justice of his Son, to whom alone you should look for aid. Ah! for the honour of God, let your majesty cease from this weeping. Having said this she rose for a handkerchief, for his was drenched with tears; Charles having taken it from her, made a sign that she should retire and leave him to repose."

The dreadful narrative of the massacre of St. Bartholomew is detailed in the history of De Thou; and the same scene is painted in glowing, though in faithful colours, by Voltaire in the Henriade.—Charles, whose last miserable moments we come from contemplating, when he observed several fugitive Huguenots about his palace, in the morning after the massacre of 30,000 of their friends, took a fowling-piece and repeatedly fired at them.

Such was the effect of religion operating, perhaps not on a malignant, but on a feeble mind! Voltaire, however, says, and it is also the concurring opinion of other historians, that Charles "though no soldier was a man of the most

sanguinary disposition, and though fond of his mistresses had a barbarous heart." The following anecdote reveals his character. One day, amusing himself with rabbit-hunting, he cried, "make them all come out that I may have the pleasure of killing them all!"

ROYAL PROMOTIONS.

If the golden gate of preferment is not usually opened to the deserving part of mankind, persons of no worth have entered in a most extraordinary manner.

Chevreau informs us, that the Sultan Osman having observed a gardener plant a cabbage with a certain dexterity and grace, it so attracted his imperial eye that he raised him to an office near his person, and shortly afterwards he rewarded this planter of cabbages by creating him *beglerbeg* or viceroy of the Isle of Cyprus!

Marc Antony gave the house of a Roman citizen to a cook, who had prepared for him a good supper! Many have been raised to extraordinary preferment by capricious monarchs for the sake of a jest. Lewis XI. promoted a poor priest whom he found sleeping in the porch of a church, that the proverb might be verified,

that to lucky men good fortune will come even when they are asleep! Our Henry VII. made a viceroy of Ireland for the sake of a clench. When he was told that all Ireland could not rule the Earl of Kildare, he said, then shall this Earl rule all Ireland.

It is recorded of Henry VIII. that he raised a servant to a considerable dignity, because he had taken care to have a roasted boar prepared for him; when his Majesty happened to be in the humour of feasting on one!

When Cardinal de Monte was elected Pope, before he left the conclave he bestowed a Cardinal's hat upon a servant, whose chief merit consisted in the daily attentions he paid to his holiness's monkey!

Louis Barbier owed all his good fortune to the familiar knowledge he had of Rabelais. He knew his Rabelais by heart. This served to introduce him to the Duke of Orleans, who took great pleasure in reading that author. It was for this he gave him an abbey, and he was gradually promoted till he became a cardinal.

George Villiers was suddenly raised from a private station, and loaded with wealth and honours by James the First, merely for his personal beauty. Almost all the favourites of James became so from their handsomeness.

M. De Chamillart, minister of France, owed

his promotion merely to his being the only man who could beat Louis XIV. at billiards. He retired with a pension after ruining the finances of his country.

The Duke of Luines was originally a country lad, who insinuated himself into the favour of Louis XIII. then young, by making bird traps (pié grieches) to catch sparrows. It was little expected, (says Voltaire,) that these puerile amusements were to be terminated by a most sanguinary revolution. De Luines, after causing his patron the Marshal of Ancre to be assassinated, the Queen Mother to be imprisoned, raised himself to a title and the most tyrannical power.

Sir Walter Raleigh owed his promotion to an act of gallantry to Queen Elizabeth, and Sir Christopher Hatton owed his preferment to his dancing; Queen Elizabeth, observes Granger, with all her sagacity could not see the future Lord Chancellor in the fine dancer. The same writer says, "Nothing could form a more curious collection of memoirs than *Anecdotes of preferment.*" Could the secret history of Great Men be traced, it would appear that merit is rarely the first step to advancement. It would much oftener be found to be owing to superficial qualifications, and even vices.

NOBILITY.

FRANCIS THE FIRST was accustomed to say, that when the nobles of his kingdom came to court, they were received by the world as so many little *Kings;* that the day after they were only beheld as so many *Princes;* but on the third day they were merely considered as so many *Gentlemen*, and were confounded among the crowd of courtiers.—It was supposed that this was done with a political view of humbling the proud *nobility;* and for this reason Henry IV. frequently said aloud, in the presence of the Princes of the blood, *We are all Gentlemen.*

It is recorded of Philip the Third of Spain, that while he exacted the most punctilious respect from the *Grandees*, he saluted the *Peasants.* He would never be addressed but on the knees; for which he gave this artful excuse, that as he was of low stature, every one would have appeared too high for him. He shewed himself rarely even to his Grandees, that he might the better support his haughtiness and repress their pride. He also affected to speak to them by half words; and reprimanded them if they did not guess at the rest. In a word, he omitted nothing that could mortify *his nobility.*

MODES OF SALUTATION, AND AMICABLE CEREMONIES, OBSERVED IN VARIOUS NATIONS.

When men, writes the philosophical compiler of "*L'Esprit des Usages et des Coutumes,*" salute each other in an amicable manner, it signifies little whether they move a particular part of the body, or practise a particular ceremony. In these actions there must exist different customs. Every nation imagines it employs the most reasonable ones; but all are equally simple, and none are to be treated as ridiculous.

This infinite number of ceremonies may be reduced to two kinds; to reverences or salutations; and to the touch of some part of the human body. To bend and prostrate oneself to express sentiments of respect, appears to be a natural motion; for terrified persons throw themselves on the earth when they adore invisible beings; and the affectionate touch of the person they salute is an expression of tenderness.

As nations decline from their ancient simplicity, much farce and grimace are introduced. Superstition, the manners of a people, and their situation, influence the modes of saluta-

tion; as may be observed from the instances we collect.

Modes of salutation have sometimes very different characters, and it is no uninteresting speculation to examine their shades. Many display a refinement of delicacy, while others are remarkable for their simplicity, or for their sensibility. In general, however, they are frequently the same in the infancy of nations, and in more polished societies. Respect, humility, fear, and esteem, are expressed much in a similar manner, for these are the natural consequences of the organization of the body.

These demonstrations become in time only empty civilities which signify nothing; we shall notice what they were originally, without reflecting on what they are.

The first nations have no peculiar modes of salutation; they know no reverences or other compliments, or they despise and disdain them. The Greenlanders laugh when they see an European uncover his head, and bend his body before him whom he calls his superior.

The Islanders, near the Philippines, take the hand or foot of him they salute, and with it they gently rub their face. The Laplanders apply their nose strongly against that of the person they salute. Dampier says, that at New Guinea they are satisfied to put on their heads

the leaves of trees, which have ever passed for symbols of friendship and peace. This is at least a picturesque salute.

Other salutations are very incommodious and painful; it requires great practice to enable a man to be polite in an island situated in the straits of the Sound. Houtman tells us they saluted him in this grotesque manner: "They raised his left foot, which they passed gently over the right leg, and from thence over his face." The inhabitants of the Philippines use a most complex attitude; they bend their body very low, place their hands on their cheeks, and raise at the same time one foot in the air with their knee bent.

An Ethiopian takes the robe of another, and ties it about his own waist, so that he leaves his friend half naked. This custom of undressing on these occasions takes other forms; sometimes men place themselves naked before the person whom they salute; it is to shew their humility, and that they are unworthy of appearing in his presence. This was practised before Sir Joseph Banks, when he received the visit of two female Otaheitans. Their innocent simplicity, no doubt, did not appear immodest in the eyes of the *virtuoso*.

Sometimes they only undress partially. The Japonese only take off a slipper; the people of

Arracan their sandals in the street, and their stockings in the house.

In the progress of time it appears servile to uncover oneself. The grandees of Spain claim the right of appearing covered before the King, to shew that they are not so much subjected to him as the rest of the nation; and (this writer truly observes) we may remark that the *English* do not uncover their heads so much as the other nations of Europe. Mr. Hobhouse observes, that uncovering the head, with the Turks, is a mark of indecent familiarity; in their mosques the Franks must keep their hats on. The Jewish custom of wearing their hats in their synagogues, arises, probably, from the same oriental custom.

In a word, there is not a nation (observes the humorous Montaigne), even to the people who when they salute turn their backs on their friends, but that can be justified in their customs.

The negroes are lovers of ludicrous actions, and hence all their ceremonies seem farcical. The greater part pull the fingers till they crack. Snelgrave gives an odd representation of the embassy which the King of Dahomy sent to him. The ceremonies of salutation consisted in the most ridiculous contortions. When two negro monarchs visit, they embrace in snapping three times the middle finger.

Barbarous nations frequently imprint on their salutation the dispositions of their character. When the inhabitants of Carmena (says Athenæus) would show a peculiar mark of esteem, they breathed a vein, and presented for the beverage of their friend the blood as it issued. The Franks tore the hair from their head, and presented it to the person they saluted. The slave cut his hair, and offered it to his master.

The Chinese are singularly affected in their personal civilities. They even calculate the number of their reverences. These are the most remarkable postures. The men move their hands in an affectionate manner, while they are joined together on the breast, and bow their head a little. If they respect a person, they raise their hands joined, and then lower them to the earth in bending the body. If two persons meet after a long separation, they both fall on their knees and bend the face to the earth, and this ceremony they repeat two or three times. Surely we may differ here with the sentiment of Montaigne, and confess this ceremony to be ridiculous. It arises from their national affectation. They substitute artificial ceremonies for natural actions.

Their expressions mean as little as their ceremonies. If a Chinese is asked how he finds

himself in health? He answers, *Very well; thanks to your abundant felicity.* If they would tell a man that he looks well, they say, *Prosperity is painted on your face*; or, *Your air announces your happiness.*

If you render them any service, they say, *My thanks shall be immortal.* If you praise them, they answer, *How shall I dare to persuade myself of what you say of me?* If you dine with them, they tell you at parting, *We have not treated you with sufficient distinction.* The various titles they invent for each other it would be impossible to translate.

It is to be observed that all these answers are to be prescribed by the Chinese ritual, or Academy of Compliments. There, are determined the number of bows; the expressions to be employed; the genuflexions, and the inclinations which are to be made to the right or left hand; the salutations of the master before the chair where the stranger is to be seated, for he salutes it most profoundly, and wipes the dust away with the skirts of his robe; all these and other things are noticed, even to the silent gestures by which you are intreated to enter the house. The lower class of people are equally nice in these punctilios; and ambassadors pass forty days in practising them before they are enabled to appear at court. A tribunal of ceremonies

has been erected; and every day very odd decrees are issued, to which the Chinese most readily submit.

The marks of honour are frequently arbitrary; to be seated, with us is a mark of repose and familiarity: to stand up, that of respect. There are countries, however, in which Princes will only be addressed by persons who are seated, and it is considered as a favour to be permitted to stand in their presence. This custom prevails in despotic countries; a despot cannot suffer without disgust the elevated figure of his subjects; he is pleased to bend their bodies with their genius; his presence must lay those who behold him prostrate on the earth: he desires no eagerness, no attention, he would only inspire terror.

SINGULARITIES OF WAR.

War kindles an enthusiasm, and therefore must occasion strange laws and customs. We may observe in it whatever is most noble and heroic mixed with what is most strange and wild. We collect facts, and the reader must draw his own conclusions.

They frequently condemned at Carthage their generals to die after an unfortunate campaign, although they were accused of no other fault.

We read in Du Halde that Captain Manchiou, a Chinese, was convicted of giving battle without obtaining a complete victory, and was punished.—With such a perspective at the conclusion of a battle generals will become intrepid, and exert themselves as much as possible, and this is all that is wanted.

When the savages of New France take flight they pile the wounded in baskets, where they are bound and corded down as we do children in swaddling clothes.—If they should happen to fall into the hands of the conquerors, they would expire in the midst of torments. It is better therefore that the vanquished should carry them away in any manner, though frequently even at the risk of their lives.

The Spartans were not allowed to combat often with the same enemy. They wished not to inure these to battle; and if their enemies revolted frequently, they were accustomed to exterminate them.

The governors of the Scythian provinces gave annually a feast to those who had valiantly, with their own hands, dispatched their enemies. The skulls of the vanquished served for their cups; and the quantity of wine they were allowed to drink was proportioned to the number of skulls they possessed. The youth, who could not yet boast of such martial exploits, contemplated dis-

tally the solemn feast, without being admitted to approach it. This institution formed courageous warriors.

War has corrupted the morals of the people, and has occasioned them to form horrible ideas of virtue. When the Portuguese attacked Madrid, in the reign of Philip V. the courtezans of that city were desirous of displaying their patriotic zeal: those who were most convinced of the envenomed state of their body perfumed themselves, and went by night to the camp of the enemy; the consequence was that in less than three weeks, there were more than six thousand Portuguese disabled with venereal maladies, and the greater part died.

Men have frequently fallen into unpardonable contradictions, in attempting to make principles and laws meet which could never agree with each other. The Jews suffered themselves to be attacked without defending themselves on the sabbath-day, and the Romans profited by these pious scruples. The council of Trent ordered the body of the constable of Bourbon, who had fought against the Pope, to be dug up, as if the head of the church was not as much subjected to crimes others, since he is a temporal Prince.

Pope Nicholas, in his answer to the Bulgarians, forbids them to make war in Lent, unless, he prudently adds, there be an urgent necessity.

FIRE, AND THE ORIGIN OF FIRE-WORKS

In the Memoirs of the French Academy, a little essay on this subject is sufficiently curious; the following contains the facts:—

Fire-works were not known to antiquity.—It is certainly a modern invention. If ever the ancients employed fires at their festivals, it was only for religious purposes.

Fire, in primæval ages, was a symbol of respect, or an instrument of terror. In both these ways God manifested himself to man. In the holy writings he compares himself sometimes to an ardent fire, to display his holiness and his purity; sometimes he renders himself visible under the form of a burning bush, to express himself to be as formidable as a devouring fire: again, he rains sulphur; and often, before he speaks, he attracts the attention of the multitude by flashes of lightning.

Fire was worshipped as a divinity by several idolaters; the Platonists confounded it with the heavens, and considered it as the divine intelligence. Sometimes it is a symbol of majesty.—God walked (if we may so express ourselves) with his people, preceded by a pillar of fire; and the monarchs of Asia, according to Herodotus,

commanded that such ensigns of their majesty should be carried before them. These fires, according to Quintus Curtius, were considered as holy and eternal, and were carried at the head of their armies on little altars of silver, in the midst of the magi who accompanied them and sang their hymns.

Fire was also a symbol of majesty amongst the Romans; and if it was used by them in their festivals, it was rather employed for the ceremonies of religion than for a peculiar mark of their rejoicings. Fire was always held to be most proper and holy for sacrifices; in this the Pagans imitated the Hebrews. The fire so carefully preserved by the Vestals was probably an imitation of that which fell from heaven on the victim offered by Aaron, and long afterwards religiously kept up by the priests. Servius, one of the seven kings of Rome, commanded a great fire of straw to be kindled in the public place of every town in Italy to consecrate for repose a certain day in seed-time, or sowing.

The Greeks lighted lamps at a certain feast held in honour of Minerva, who gave them oil; of Vulcan, who was the inventor of lamps; and of Prometheus, who had rendered them service by the fire which he had stolen from heaven. Another feast to Bacchus was celebrated by a grand nocturnal illumination, in which wine was

poured forth profusely to all passengers. A feast in memory of Ceres, who sought so long in the darkness of hell for her daughter, was [illegible] by burning a number of torches.

Great illuminations were made in various other meetings; particularly in the Secular Games, which lasted three whole nights; and so carefully were they kept up that these nights had no darkness.

In all their rejoicings the ancients indeed used fires, but they were intended merely to burn their sacrifices, and which, as the generality of them were performed at night, the illuminations served to give light to the ceremonies.

Artificial fires were indeed frequently used by them, but not in public rejoicings; like us, they employed them for military purposes; but we use them likewise successfully for our decorations and amusement.

From the latest times of paganism to the early ages of Christianity, we can but rarely quote instances of fire lighted up for other purposes, in a public form, than for the ceremonies of religion; illuminations were made at the baptism of Princes, as a symbol of that life of light in which they were going to enter by faith; [illegible] the tombs of martyrs; to light them during the watchings of the night. All these were abolished from the various abuses they introduced.

We only trace the rise of *feux de joie*, or fire-works given merely for amusing spectacles to delight the eye, to the epocha of the invention of powder and cannon, at the close of the thirteenth century. It was these two inventions, doubtless, whose effects furnished the idea of all those machines and artifices which form the charms of these fires.

To the Florentines and the Sianese are we indebted not only for the preparation of powder with other ingredients to amuse the eyes, but also for the invention of elevated machines and decorations adapted to augment the pleasure of the spectacle. They began their attempts at the feasts of Saint John the Baptist and the Assumption, on wooden edifices, which they adorned with painted statues, from whose mouth and eyes issued a beautiful fire. Callot has engraven numerous specimens of the pageants, triumphs, and processions, under a great variety of grotesque forms:—Dragons, Swans, Eagles, &c. which were built up large enough to carry many persons, while they vomited forth the most amusing fire-work.

This use passed from Florence to Rome, where, at the creation of the Popes, they displayed illuminations of hand-grenadoes, thrown from the height of a castle. *Pyrotechnics* from that time have become an art, which, in the

degree the inventors have displayed ability in combining the powers of architecture, sculpture, and painting, have produced a number of beautiful effects, which even give pleasure to those who read the descriptions, without having beheld them.

A pleasing account of decorated fire-works is given in the Secret Memoirs of France. In August 1764, Torré, an Italian artist, obtained permission to exhibit a pyrotechnic operation.—The Parisians admired the variety of the colours, and the ingenious forms of his fire. But this first exhibition was disturbed by the populace, as well as by the apparent danger of the fire, although it was displayed on the Boulevards. In October it was repeated; and proper precautions having been taken, they admired the beauty of the fire without fearing it. These artificial fires are described as having been rapidly and splendidly executed. The exhibition closed with a transparent triumphal arch, and a curtain illuminated by the same fire, admirably exhibiting the palace of Pluto.—Around the columns, stanzas were inscribed, supported by Cupids, with other fanciful embellishments. Among these little pieces of poetry appeared the following one, which ingeniously announced a more perfect exhibition.

Les vents, les frimats, les orages,
Eteindront ces FEUX, pour un tems;
Mais, ainsi que les FLEURS, avec plus d'avantage,
Ils renaîtront dans le printems.

IMITATED.

The icy gale, the falling snow,
Extinction to these FIRES shall bring;
But, like the FLOWERS, with brighter glow,
They shall renew their charms in spring.

The exhibition was greatly improved, according to this promise of the artist. His subject was chosen with much felicity: it was a representation of the forges of Vulcan under Mount Ætna. The interior of the mount discovered Vulcan and his Cyclops. Venus was seen to descend, and demand of her consort armour for Æneas.—Opposite to this was seen the palace of Vulcan, which presented a deep and brilliant perspective. The labours of the Cyclops produced numberless very happy combinations of artificial fires. The public with pleasing astonishment beheld the effects of the volcano, so admirably adapted to the nature of these fires. At another entertainment he gratified the public with a representation of Orpheus and Eurydice in hell; a thousand striking circumstances occasioned a marvellous illusion. What subjects indeed could be more analogous to this kind of fire? And let me ask, what is the reason we do not see these artificial fires

display more brilliant effects in London? What man of taste can be gratified with stars, wheels, and rockets?

THE BIBLE PROHIBITED AND IMPROVED.

THE following are the *express words* contained in the regulation of the Popes to prohibit the use of the *Bible.*

" As it is manifest by *experience*, that if the use of the holy writers is permitted in the vulgar tongue more evil than profit will arise, *because* of the temerity of man; it is for this reason all Bibles are prohibited *(prohibentur Biblia)* with all their *parts*, whether they be printed or written, in whatever vulgar language soever; as also are prohibited all summaries or abridgments of Bibles, or any books of the holy writings, although they should only be historical, and that in whatever vulgar tongue they be written."

It is there also said, " That the reading the Bibles of *catholic editors* may be permitted to those by whose perusal or power the *faith* may be spread, and who will not *criticise* it. But this *permission* is not to be granted without an express *order* of the *bishop*, or the *inquisitor*, with the *advice* of the *curate* and *confessor*; and their permission must first be had in *writing.*

And he who without permission presumes to read the holy writings, or to have them in his *possession*, shall not be *absolved* of his sins before he first shall have returned the Bible to his bishop."

A Spanish author says, that if a person should come to his bishop to ask for leave to *read the Bible*, with the best intention, the bishop should answer him from Matthew, ch. xx. ver. 20. "*You know not what you ask.*" And indeed (he observes) the nature of this demand indicates an *heretical disposition.*

Dr. [redacted], in his own Life, has preserved a singular anecdote of the Bible being prohibited in England in the time of our true Catholic Mary. His family had then early embraced the Reformation; "They had an English Bible, and to conceal it the more securely, they conceived the project of fastening it open with pack-threads across the leaves, on the inside of the lid of a close-stool! When my great-grandfather wished to read to his family, he reversed the lid of the close-stool upon his knees, and passed the leaves from one side to the other, which were held down on each by the pack-thread. One of the children was stationed at the door to give notice if he saw an officer of the Spiritual Court make his appearance; in that case the lid was restored to its place, with the Bible concealed under it as before."

I shall leave the reader to make his own reflections on this extraordinary account. He may meditate on what the *Popes did*, and what they probably would *have done*, had not Luther happily been in a humour to abuse the Pope, and begin a Reformation. It would be curious to sketch an account of the *probable* situation of *Europe* at the present moment, had the Popes preserved the singular power of which they had possessed themselves.

It appears by an act dated in 1516, that in those days the Bible was called *Bibliotheca*, that is *per emphasim, the Library*. The word library was limited in its signification then to the biblical writings; no other books, compared with the holy writings, appear to have been worthy to rank with them, or constitute what we call a library.

We have had several remarkable attempts to recompose the Bible; Dr. Geddes's version is aridly literal, and often ludicrous by its vulgarity; but the following attempts are of a very different kind. Sebastian *Castillon*, who afterwards changed his name to *Castalion*, with his accustomed affectation referring to *Castalia*, the fountain of the Muses—took a very extraordinary liberty with the sacred writings. He fancied he could give the world a more classical version of the Bible, and for this purpose intro-

duced phrases and entire sentences from profane writers into the text of holy writ. His whole style is finically quaint, overloaded with prettinesses, and all the ornaments of false taste. Of the noble simplicity of the scriptures he seems not to have had the remotest conception.

But an attempt by Pere Berruyer is more extraordinary; in his *Histoire du Peuple de Dieu*, he has recomposed the Bible as he would have written a fashionable novel. With refined absurdity, he conceives that the great Legislator of the Hebrews is too barren in his descriptions, too concise in the events he records, nor is careful to enrich his history by pleasing reflections and interesting conversation-pieces, and hurries on the catastrophes, by which means he omits much entertaining matter; as for instance, in the loves of Joseph and the wife of Potiphar, Moses is very dry and concise, which, however, our Pere Berruyer is not. His histories of Joseph, and of King David, are relishing morsels, and were devoured eagerly in all the Boudoirs of Paris. Take a specimen of the style. "Joseph combined with a regularity of features, and a brilliant complexion, an air of the noblest dignity; all which contributed to render him one of the most amiable men in Egypt." At length "she declares her passion, and pressed him to answer her. It never entered her mind that the

advances of a woman of her rank could ever be rejected. Joseph at first only replied to her wishes by his cold embarrassment. She would not yet give him up. In vain he flies her; she was too passionate to waste even the moments of his astonishment." This good father, however, does ample justice to the gallantry of the Patriarch Jacob. He offers to serve Laban seven years for Rachel. Nothing is too much, cries the venerable novelist, when one really loves, and this admirable observation he confirms by the facility with which the obliging Rachel allows Leah for one night to be [illegible]! It is thus that the Patriarchs speak in the tone of the tenderest lovers. Judith is a Parisian coquette, and Holofernes is rude as a German Baron; and their dialogues are tedious with all the reciprocal politesse of metaphysical French lovers! Moses in the desert, it was observed, is precisely as pedantic as Pere Berruyer addressing his class at the University. One cannot but smile at the following expressions: "By the easy manner in which God performed miracles, one might easily perceive they cost no effort." When he has narrated an "Adventure of the Patriarchs," he proceeds, "After such an extraordinary, or curious, or interesting adventure, &c." This good father had caught the language of the Beau Monde, but with such perfect innocence,

that, in employing it on the holy history, he was not aware of the buffoonery.

It is a very remarkable fact, that a Gothic Bishop translated the scriptures into the Goth language, but omitted the *Books of Kings!* Lest the *wars*, of which so much is there recorded, should increase their inclination to fighting, already too prevalent. Jortin notices this castrated copy of the Bible in his Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.

ORIGIN OF THE MATERIALS OF WRITING.

From the "Literary History of France," by the learned Benedictines, I have collected the chief materials of the present article. It is curious to observe the various substitutes for paper, before its discovery.

The most ancient mode of writing was on *bricks*, and on *tables of stone*; afterwards on *plates* of various materials, on *ivory*, on *barks* of trees, on *leaves* of trees*.

* Specimens of most of these modes of writing may be seen in the British Museum. No. 3478, in the Sloanian library, is a Nabob's letter, on a piece of bark about two yards long, and richly ornamented with gold. No. 3207, is a book of Mexican hieroglyphics painted on bark. In the same collection are various species, many from the Malabar Coast and the East.

Engraving memorable events on hard substances, it has been prettily observed, was giving, as it were, speech to rocks and metals. In the book of Job mention is made of writing on *stone*, and on sheets of *lead*. It was on tables of *stone* that Moses received the law written by the finger of God himself. Hesiod's works were written on *leaden* tables; lead was used for writing, and rolled up like a cylinder, as Pliny states. Montfaucon notices a very ancient book of eight leaden leaves, which on the back had rings fastened by a small leaden rod to keep them together. They afterwards engraved on bronze: the laws of the Greeks were on bronze tables, and the speech of Claudius engraved on plates of bronze are yet preserved in the town hall of Lyons in France.

Among these early inventions many appear to have been singularly rude, and wretched substitutes for a better material. In the shepherd state they wrote their songs with thorns and awls on straps of leather, which they wound round their crooks. The Icelanders appear to have

The latter writings are chiefly on leaves. The prophecies of the Sibyls were on leaves. There are several copies of Bibles written on palm-leaves, still preserved in various collections in Europe. The ancients, doubtless, wrote on any leaves they found adapted for the purpose. Hence the *leaf* of a *book*, as well as that of a tree, is derived.

scratched their *runes*, a kind of hieroglyphics, on walls; and Olof, according to one of the Sagas, built a large house, on the bulks and spars of which he had engraved the history of his own and more ancient times; while another northern hero appears to have had nothing better than his own chair and bed to perpetuate his own heroic acts on. This exhibits a very curious, and the rudest state of Society possible. The same event occurred among the ancient Arabs, who, according to the history of Mahomet, seem to have taken the shoulder-bones of sheep, on which they carved remarkable events with a knife, and after tying them with a string they hung these chronicles up in their cabinets.

The laws of the twelve tables which the Romans chiefly copied from the Grecian code were, after they had been approved by the people, engraved on brass; they were melted by lightning, which struck the capital and consumed other laws; a loss highly regretted by Augustus. This manner of writing we still retain, for the inscriptions, epitaphs, and other memorials designed to reach posterity.

These early inventions led to the discovery of tablets of *wood*; and as *cedar* is incorruptible from its bitterness, they chose this wood for cases or chests to preserve their most important

writings. From this custom arises the celebrated expression of the ancients, when they meant to give the highest eulogium of an excellent work, *et cedro digna locuti;* that it was worthy to be written on *cedar**. These *tablets* were made of the *trunks of trees;* the use of them still exists, but in general they are made of other materials than wood. The same reason which led to prefer the *cedar* to other trees induced to write on *wax*, which is incorruptible from its nature. Men generally used it to write their testaments, in order the better to preserve them; thus Juvenal says, *Ceras implere capaces.* This thin paste of wax was also used on tablets of wood, that it might more easily admit of erasure.

They wrote with an iron bodkin, as they did on the other substances we have noticed. The *stylus* was made sharp at one end to write with, and blunt and broad at the other, to deface and correct easily; hence the phrase *vertere stylum*,

* This also meant *the oil of cedar;* with which valuable MSS. of parchment were anointed, to preserve them from corruption. Brewster, in his excellent version of Persius, illustrates this:

"When such his labours, such his sacred page,
As *cedar's juice* should vindicate from age.

They stained materials for writing upon with purple, and tinged them with an *oil* drawn from *cedar-wood*, to preserve them from corruption and worms.

to turn the stylus, was used to express blotting out. But the Romans forbad the use of this sharp instrument, from the circumstance of many persons having used them as daggers. A schoolmaster was killed by the Pugillares or table-book, and the styles of his own scholars. They substituted a *stylus* made of the bone of a bird, or other animal; so that their writings resembled engravings. When they wrote on softer materials, they employed *reeds* and *canes* split like our pens at the points, which the Orientalists still use to lay their colour or ink neater on the paper.

Naudé observes, that when he was in Italy, about 1612, he saw some of those waxen tablets called Pugillares, so called because they were held in one hand; and others composed of the barks of trees, which the ancients employed in lieu of paper.

On these tablets or table-books, Mr. Astle observes, that the Greeks and Romans continued the use of waxed table-books long after the use of the papyrus, leaves, and skins became common; because they were so convenient for correcting extemporaneous compositions; from these table-books they transcribed their performances correctly into parchment-books, if for their own private use; but if for sale, or for the library, the *Librarii*, or Scribes, had the

office. The writing on table-books is particularly recommended by Quintilian in the third chapter of the tenth book of his Institutions; because the wax is readily effaced for any corrections: he confesses weak eyes do not see so well on paper, but he observes that the frequent necessity of dipping the pen in the inkstand retards the hand, and is but ill suited to the celerity of the mind. Some of these table-books are conjectured to have been large, and perhaps heavy (particularly when used by certain compilers); for in Plautus, a school-boy is represented breaking his master's head with his table-book: according to Cicero, it appears that the critics were accustomed in reading their wax manuscripts to notice obscure or vicious phrases by joining a piece of red wax.

Table-books written upon with styles were not entirely laid aside in Chaucer's time, who describes them in his Sompner's tale.

> "His fellow had a staffe tipped with horne,
> *A paire of tables all of iverie;*
> And a *pointell polished* fetouslie,
> And wrote alwaies the names, as he stood,
> Of all folke, that gave hem any good."

By the word *pen* in the translation of the Bible, we are to understand it means an iron *style*. Table-books of ivory are still used for

memoranda, written with black-lead pencils. The Romans used ivory to write the edicts of the Senate on; and the expression of *libris elephantinis*, which some authors imagine alludes to books which for their *size* were called *elephantine*, others more rationally conclude, were composed of ivory, the tusk of the elephant.

Pumice was likewise a writing-material of the ancients, which they used to smooth the roughness of the parchment, or to sharpen their reeds.

In the progress of time the art of writing consisted in *painting* with different kinds of *ink*. This novel mode of writing occasioned them to invent other materials proper to receive their writing. They now chose the thin bark of certain *trees* and *plants*; they wrote on *linen*, and at length, when this was found apt to become mouldy, they prepared the *skins of animals*. Those of asses are still in use; and on those of serpents, &c. were once written the Iliad and Odyssey. The first place where they began to dress these skins was *Pergamus*, in Asia; whence the Latin name is derived of *Pergamenæ* or *parchment*. These skins are, however, better known amongst the authors of the purest Latin under the name of *membrana*; so called from the membranes of animals of which they were composed. The ancients had *parchments* of three different colours, white,

yellow, and purple. At Rome white parchment was disliked, because it was more subject to be soiled than the others, and dazzled the eye. They generally wrote in letters of gold and silver on purple or violet parchment. This custom continued in the early ages of the church; and copies of the evangelists of this kind are preserved in the British Museum.

When the Egyptians employed for writing the *bark* of a *plant* or *reed*, called *papyrus** or paper-rush, it superseded all former modes, because this was the most convenient. Formerly there grew great quantities of it on the sides of the Nile. It is this plant which has given the name to our *paper*, although the latter is composed of linen or rags. After the eighth century the papyrus was superseded by parchment. The *Chinese* make their *paper* with *silk*. The use of *paper* is of great antiquity. It is what the ancient Latinists call *charta* or *chartæ*. Before the use of *parchment* and *paper* passed to the Romans, they contrived to use the thin peel which was found on trees, between the wood of these trees and their bark. This second skin they called *liber*, from whence the Latin word

* A specimen of the Papyrus is to be seen at the British Museum; it is the first known in England. It was brought by Mr. Bruce, and given to Sir Joseph Banks, who presented it to the British Museum.

liber, a book, and *library* and *librarian* in the European languages, and the French *livre* for book; but we of northern origin derive our *book* from the Danish *bog*, the beech-tree, because that being the most plentiful in Denmark was used to engrave on. Anciently, instead of folding this bark, this parchment, or paper, as we fold ours, they rolled it according as they wrote on it; and the Latin name which they gave these rolls has passed into our languages as well as the others. We say a *volume* or volumes, although our books are composed of pages cut and bound together. The books of the ancients on the shelves of their libraries, were rolled up on a pin and placed erect, titled on the outside in red letters, or rubrics, and appeared like a number of small pillars on the shelves.

The ancients were as curious as ourselves in having their books richly conditioned. Propertius describes tablets with gold borders, and Ovid notices their red titles; but in later times, besides the tint of purple with which they tinged their vellum, and the liquid gold which they employed for their ink, they enriched with precious stones the covers of their books. In the early ages of the church they painted on the outside commonly a dying Christ. In the curious library of Mr. Douce is a Psalter, supposed

once to have appertained to Charlemagne; the vellum is purple, and the letters gold. The eastern nations likewise stained their MSS. with different colours and decorations. Astle possessed Arabian MSS. of which some leaves were of a deep yellow, and others of a lilac colour. Sir Wm. Jones describes an oriental MS. in which the name of Mohammed was fancifully adorned with a garland of tulips and carnations, painted in the brightest colours. The favourite works of the Persians are written on fine silky paper, the ground of which is often powdered with gold or silver dust; the leaves are frequently illuminated, and the whole book is sometimes perfumed with essence of roses or sandal wood.

Our present paper surpasses all other materials for ease and convenience of writing. The first paper-mill in England was erected at Dartfort, by a German, in 1588, who was knighted by Elizabeth; but it was not before 1713, that a stationer, one Thomas Watkins, brought the art of paper-making to any perfection, and to the industry of this individual we owe the origin of our numerous paper-mills.

The manufacture of paper was not much encouraged at home, even so late as in 1662; and the following observations by Fuller are curious, respecting the paper of his times. "Paper participates in some sort of the characters of the

country which makes it, the *Venetian*, being neat, subtile, and court-like; the *French*, light, slight, and slender; and the *Dutch* thick, corpulent, and gross, sucking up the ink with the sponginess thereof." He complains that the paper manufactories were not then sufficiently encouraged, "considering the vast sums expended in our land for paper, out of Italy, France, and Germany, which might be lessened were it made in our nation. To such, adds he, who object that we can never equal the perfection of *Venice-paper*, I return, neither can we match the purity of Venice-glasses; and yet many *green ones* are blown in Sussex, profitable to the makers, and convenient for the users. Our *home-spun paper* might be found beneficial."

Mr. Astle deeply complains of the inferiority of our *inks* to those of antiquity; an inferiority productive of the most serious consequences, and which appears to originate merely in our own want of care. From the important benefits arising to Society from the use of ink, and the injuries individuals may suffer from the frauds of designing men, he wishes the legislature would frame some new regulations respecting it. The composition of ink is simple, but we possess none equal in beauty and colour to that used by the ancients; the Saxon mss.

written in England, exceed in colour any thing of the kind. The rolls and records from the fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth, compared with those of the fifth to the twelfth centuries, shew the excellence of the latter, which are all in the finest preservation, while the former are so much defaced, that they are scarcely legible. It is a very serious consideration, in respect to the security of property, that the Records of Parliament, the decisions and adjudications of the courts of justice, conveyances, wills, testaments, &c. should be written on ink of such durable quality as may best resist the destructive power of time and the elements.

The ink of the ancients had nothing in common with ours, but the colour and gum. Gall-nuts, copperas, and gum make up the composition of our ink, whereas *soot* or *ivory-black* was the chief ingredient in that of the ancients.

Ink has been made of various colours; we find golden and silver ink, and red, green, yellow, and blue inks; but black ink is considered as the best adapted to its purpose.

ANECDOTES OF EUROPEAN MANNERS.

The following circumstances probably gave rise to the tyranny of the feudal power, and are

the facts on which the fictions of romance are raised. Castles were erected to repulse the vagrant attacks of the Normans, and in France (from the year 768 to 987) these places disturbed the public repose. The petty despots who raised these castles, pillaged whoever passed, and carried off the females who pleased them. Rapine, of every kind, were the *privileges* of the feudal Lords! Mezeray observes, that it is from these circumstances romancers have invented their tales of *knights errant, monsters,* and *giants.*

De Saint Foix, in his "Historical Essays," informs us that "Women and girls were not in greater security when they passed by abbeys. The monks sustained an assault rather than relinquish their prey: if they saw themselves losing ground, they brought to their walls the relics of some Saint. Then it generally happened that the assailants, seized with awful veneration, retired, and dared not pursue their vengeance. This is the origin of the *enchanters,* of the *enchantments,* and of the *enchanted Castles* described in romances."

To these may be added what the author of "Northern Antiquities," Vol. I. p. 243, writes, that as the walls of the castles ran winding round them, they often called them by a name which signified *serpents* or *dragons;* and in

these were commonly secured the women and young maids of distinction, who were seldom safe at a time when so many bold warriors were rambling up and down in search of adventures. It was this custom which gave occasion to ancient romancers, who knew not how to describe any thing simply, to invent so many fables concerning princesses of great beauty guarded by *dragons.*

A singular and barbarous custom prevailed during this period; it consisted in punishments by *mutilations.* It became so general that the abbots, instead of bestowing canonical penalties on their monks, obliged them to cut off an ear, an arm, or a leg!

Abbé Velly in his History of France has described two festivals, which give a just idea of the manners and devotion of a later period, (1230,) which like the ancient mysteries consisted of a mixture of farce and piety; religion in fact was their amusement! The following one existed even to the reformation.

In the church of Paris, and in several other cathedrals of the kingdom, was held the *Feast of Fools* or madmen. "The priests and clerks assembled, elected a pope, an archbishop, or a bishop, conducted them in great pomp to the church, which they entered dancing, masked, and dressed in the apparel of women, animals,

and Merry Andrews; sung infamous songs, converted the altar into a beaufet, were they ate and drank during the celebration of the holy mysteries; played with dice; burned, instead of incence, the leather of their old sandals; ran about, and leaped from seat to seat, with all the indecent postures with which the Merry Andrews know how to amuse the populace."

The other does not yield for extravagance. "This festival was called the *Feast of Asses*, and was celebrated at Beauvais. They chose a young woman, the handsomest in the town; they made her ride on an ass richly harnessed, and placed in her arms a pretty infant. In this state, followed by the bishop and clergy, she marched in procession from the cathedral to the church of St. Stephen's; entered into the sanctuary; placed herself near the altar, and the mass began; whatever the choir sung was terminated by this charming burthen, *Hihan, hihan!* Their prose, half Latin and half French, explained the fine qualities of the animal. Every strophe finished by this delightful invitation:

Hez, sire Ane, ça chantez
Belle bouche rechignez,
Vous aurés du foin assez
Et de l'avoine à plantez.

They at length exhorted him in making a de-

vout genuflexion, to forget his ancient food, for the purpose of repeating without ceasing, *Amen, Amen.* The priest, instead of *Ite missa est*, sung three times, *Hihan, hihan, hihan!* and the people three times answered, *Hihan, hihan, hihan!* to imitate the braying of that grave animal.

What shall we think of this imbecility of the human mind? Can the most erroneous philosophy turn into greater absurdity the ceremonies of false religion than its votaries have themselves done? This *ass* was perhaps typical of the *ass* which Jesus rode? The children of Israel worshipped a golden ass, and Balaam made another speak. How unfortunate then was *James Naylor*, who desirous of entering Bristol on an *ass*, Hume informs us, it is indeed but a piece of cold pleasantry, that all Bristol could not afford him *one!*

At the time when all these follies were practised, they would not suffer men to play at *chess!* Velly says, "A statute of Eudes de Sully prohibits clergymen not only from playing at chess, but even from having a chess-board in their house." Who could believe, that while half the ceremonies of religion consisted in the grossest buffoonery, a Prince preferred death rather than cure himself by a remedy which offended his chastity. This historian informs us, that Louis

VIII. being dangerously ill, the physicians consulted and agreed to place near the monarch while he slept, a young and beautiful lady, who, when he awoke, should inform him of the motive which had conducted her to him. Louis answered, "No, my girl, I prefer dying rather than to save my life by a *mortal sin!*" And, in fact, the good king died! He would not be prescribed for out of the whole Pharmacopeia of Love!

The following account of our taste in female beauty is given by Mr. Ellis, who observes, in his notes to Wray's Fabliaux, "In the times of chivalry the minstrels dwell with great complacency on the fair hair and delicate complexion of their Damsels. This taste was continued for a long time, and to render the hair light was a great object of education. Even when wigs first came into fashion they were all flaxen. Such was the colour of the Gauls and of their German conquerors. It required some centuries to reconcile their eyes to the swarthy beauties of their Spanish and their Italian neighbours."

The following is an amusing anecdote of the difficulty in which an honest Vicar of Bray found himself in those contentious times.

When the court of Rome, under the pontificates of Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. set no

bounds to their ambitious projects, they were opposed by the Emperor Frederick; who was of course anathematised. A curate of Paris, an humorous fellow, got up in his pulpit with the bull of Innocent in his hand. You know, my brethren, (said he) that I am ordered to proclaim an excommunication against Frederick. I am ignorant of the motive. All that I know is, that there exists between this Prince and the Roman Pontiff great differences, and an irreconcileable hatred. God only knows which of the two is wrong. Therefore with all my power I excommunicate him who injures the other; and I absolve him who suffers, to the great scandal of all Christianity.

The borders of the illuminated MSS. contain frequently ingenious Caricatures, or Satirical Allegories on the Monks. In one of Froissart's Manuscript Chronicles I remember several. A wolf disguised in a monk's frock and cowl, stretching his paw to bless a cock that bends its head submissively to the wolf; to satirise the blind devotion of the bigots; the figure of the cock probably alluding to our Gallic neighbours. A little higher there was a cat in the habit of a nun, holding a platter in its paw to a mouse that was approaching to lick it: to satirise, I suppose, the allurements of the abbesses into their convents. A pope sometimes appears

to be thrust by the devils into a cauldron, and cardinals are seen roasting on spits. Wolves dressed in pontifical habits tear to pieces a flock of sheep.

The following anecdotes relate to a period which is sufficiently remote to excite curiosity, yet not so distant as to weaken the interest we feel in those minutiæ of the times.

The present one may serve as a curious specimen of the despotism and simplicity of an age not literary, in discovering the author of a libel. It took place in the reign of Henry VIII. A great jealousy subsisted between the Londoners and those Foreigners who traded here. The Foreigners probably (observes Mr. Lodge, in his Illustrations of English History, Vol. I. p. 8) worked cheaper and were more industrious.

There was a libel affixed on St. Paul's door, which reflected on Henry VIII. and these Foreigners, who were accused of buying up the wool with the King's money, to the undoing of Englishmen. This tended to inflame the minds of the people. The method adopted to discover the writer of the libel must excite a smile in the present day, while it shews the state in which knowledge must have been in this country. The plan adopted was this: In every ward one of the King's council, with an alderman of the same, was commanded to see every

man write that could, and further took every man's book and sealed them, and brought them to Guildhall to confront them with the original. —So that if of this number many wrote alike, the Judges must have been much puzzled to fix on the criminal.

Our hours of refection are singularly changed in little more than two centuries. In the reign of Francis I. (observes the author of Recreations Historiques) they were yet accustomed to say,

> Lever a cinq, diner a neuf,
> Souper a cinq, coucher a neuf,
> Fait vivre d'ans nonante et neuf.

Historians observe of Louis XII. that one of the causes which contributed to hasten his death, was the entire change of his regimen. The good King, by the persuasion of his wife, (says the history of Bayard) changed his manner of living; when he was accustomed to dine at eight o'clock he agreed to dine at twelve; and when he was used to retire to bed at six o'clock in the evening he frequently sat up as late as midnight.

Houssaie gives the following authentic notice drawn from the registers of the court, which presents a curious account of the domestic life in the fifteenth century. Of the dauphin Louis,

son of Charles VI. who died at the age of twenty, it is there said: "That he knew the Latin and French languages; that he had many musicians in his chapel, passed the night in vigils, dined at three in the afternoon, supped at midnight, went to bed at the break of day, and thus was *acertené* (that is threatened) with a short life." These hours are now become so general that they cease to be a singularity; but perhaps they tend to shorten life. Froissart mentions waiting upon the Duke of Lancaster at five o'clock in the afternoon, when he *had supped.*

The custom of dining at nine in the morning relaxed greatly under Francis I. his successor. However, persons of quality dined then the latest at ten; and supper was at five or six in the evening. We may observe this in the preface to the Heptaemeron of the Queen of Navarre, where this Princess delineating the mode of life which the lords and ladies (whom she assembles at the castle of Madame Oysille, one of her characters) should follow to be agreeably occupied, and to banish languor, is expressed in these terms. "As soon as the morning rose, they went to the chamber of Madame Oysille, whom they found already at her prayers; and when they had heard during a good hour her lecture, and then the mass, they went to dine at ten o'clock; and afterwards each retired to his

room to do what was wanted, and did not fail at noon to meet in the meadow." Speaking of the end of this first day (which was in September) the same lady Oysille says, "Say where is the sun? and hear the bell of the Abbey, which has for some time called us to vespers; and in saying this they all rose and went to the religionists, *who had waited for them above an hour.* Vespers heard, they went to supper, and after having played a thousand sports in the meadow, they retired to bed." All this exactly corresponds with the lines above quoted. Charles V. of France, however, who lived near two centuries before Francis, dined at ten, supped at seven, and all the court was in bed by nine o'clock. They sounded the Curfew, which bell warned them to cover their fire, at six in the winter, and between eight and nine in the summer. A custom which exists in most religious societies; who did not then distinguish themselves from the ordinary practice. (This was written in 1767.) Under the reign of Henry IV. the hour of dinner at court was eleven, or at noon the latest; a custom which prevailed even in the early part of the reign of Louis XIV. In the provinces distant from Paris, it is very common to dine at nine; they make a second repast about two o'clock, and sup at five; and their last meal is made just be-

fore they retire to bed. The labourers and peasants in France have preserved this custom, and make three meals; one at nine, another at three, and the last at the setting of the sun."

The following curious anecdotical observations are made by the Marquis of Mirabeau, in "L'Ami des Hommes," vol. I. p. 261. They give a striking representation of the singular industry of the French citizens of that age. He there tells us that he had learnt from several ancient citizens of Paris, that if in their youth a workman did not work two hours by candle-light, either in the morning or evening (he even adds in the longest days) he would have been remarked as an idler, and would not have found persons to employ him. M. Mirabeau adds, that it was the 12th of May, 1588, when Henry III. ordered his troops to occupy various posts in Paris. Davila writes, that the inhabitants, warned by the noise of the drums, began to shut their doors and shops, which, according to the custom of that town to work before day-break, were already opened. This must have been, taking it at the latest, about four in the morning. "In 1750," adds the ingenious writer, "I walked on that day through Paris at full six in the morning; I passed through the most busy and populous part of the city, and I only saw open some stalls of the venders of brandy!"

To the article "Anecdotes of Fashions," in the preceding volume, we may add, that in England a taste for splendid dress existed in the reign of Henry VII.; as is observable by the following description of Nicholas Lord Vaux, which I give in the words of Lord Orford. "In the 17th of that reign, at the marriage of Prince Arthur, the brave young Vaux appeared in a gown of purple velvet, adorned with pieces of gold so thick and massive, that exclusive of the silk and furs, it was valued at a thousand pounds. About his neck he wore a collar of S. S. weighing eight hundred pounds in nobles. In those days it not only required great bodily strength to support the weight of their cumbersome armour; their very luxury of apparel for the drawing-room would oppress a system of modern muscles."

In the following reign, according to the monarch's and Wolsey's magnificent taste, their dress was, perhaps, more generally sumptuous. We then find the following rich ornaments in vogue. Shirts and shifts were embroidered with gold, and bordered with lace. Strutt notices also perfumed gloves lined with white velvet, and splendidly worked with embroidery and gold buttons. Not only gloves, but various other parts of their habits, were perfumed; shoes were made of Spanish perfumed skins.

Carriages were then not used; so that Lords

would carry Princesses on a pillion behind them, and in wet weather the ladies covered their heads with hoods of oil-cloth. A custom that has been generally continued to the middle of the seventeenth century. The use of Coaches was introduced into England by Fitzalan Earl of Arundel, in 1580, and at first were only drawn by a pair of horses. The favourite Buckingham, about 1619, began to have them drawn by six horses, and Wilson in his life of James I. tells us this "was wondered at as a novelty, and imputed to him as a mastering pride." The same *arbiter elegantiarum* introduced sedan chairs. In France, Catherine of Medicis was the first who used a coach, which had leather doors, and curtains instead of glass windows. If the carriage of Henry IV. had had glass windows, this circumstance might have saved his life. Carriages were so rare in the reign of this monarch, that in a letter to his minister Sully, he notices that having taken medicine that day, though he had intended to have called on him, he was prevented, because the Queen had gone out with the carriage. Even as late as in the reign of Louis XIV. the courtiers rode a horseback to their dinner parties, and wore their light boots and spurs. Count Hamilton describes his boots of white Spanish leather with gold spurs.

Saint Foix observes, that in 1658 there were

only 310 coaches in Paris, and in 1758 there were more than 14,000.

Strutt has judiciously observed, that though "luxury and grandeur was so much affected, and appearances of state and splendour carried to such lengths, we may conclude that their household furniture and domestic necessaries were also carefully attended to; on passing through their houses, we may expect to be surprised at the neatness, elegance, and superb appearance of each room, and the suitableness of every ornament; but herein we may be deceived. The taste of elegance amongst our ancestors, was very different from the present, and however we may find them extravagant in their apparel, excessive in their banquets, and expensive in their trains of attendants; yet, follow them home, and within their houses you shall find their furniture is plain and homely; no great choice, but what was useful, rather than any for ornament or show."

Erasmus, as quoted by Jortin, confirms this account, and makes it worse; he gives a curious account of English dirtiness; he ascribes the plague, from which England was hardly ever free, and the sweating-sickness, partly to the incommodious form, and bad exposition of the houses, to the filthiness of the streets, and to the sluttishness within doors. The floors, says he,

are commonly of clay, strewed with rushes; under which lies, unmolested, an ancient collection of beer, grease, fragments, bones, spittle, excrements of dogs and cats, and every thing that is nasty.

I shall give a sketch of the domestic life of a nobleman in the reign of Charles the First, from the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, written by his Duchess, whom I have already noticed. It might have been impertinent at the time of its publication; it will now please those who are curious on English manners.

"Of his Habit.

"He accoutres his person according to the fashion, if it be one that is not troublesome and uneasy for men of heroic exercises and actions. He is neat and cleanly; which makes him to be somewhat long in dressing, though not so long as many effeminate persons are. He shifts ordinarily once a day, and every time when he uses exercise, or his temper is more hot than ordinary.

"Of his Diet.

"In his diet he is so sparing and temperate, that he never eats nor drinks beyond his set proportion, so as to satisfy only his natural appetite; he makes but one meal a day, at which he drinks two good glasses of small beer, one about the beginning, the other at the end thereof, and

a little glass of sack in the middle of his dinner; which glass of sack he also uses in the morning for his breakfast, with a morsel of bread. His supper consists of an egg and a draught of small beer. And by this temperance he finds himself very healthful, and may yet live many years, he being now of the age of seventy-three.

"His Recreation and Exercise.

"His prime pastime and recreation hath always been the exercise of mannage and weapons, which heroic arts he used to practice every day; but I observing that when he had overheated himself he would be apt to take cold, prevailed so far, that at last he left the frequent use of the mannage, using nevertheless still the exercise of weapons; and though he doth not ride himself so frequently as he hath done, yet he taketh delight in seeing his horses of mannage rid by his escuyers, whom he instructs in that art for his own pleasure. But in the art of weapons (in which he has a method beyond all that ever was famous in it, found out by his own ingenuity and practice) he never taught any body but the now Duke of Buckingham, whose guardian he hath been, and his own two sons. The rest of his time he spends in music, poetry, architecture, and the like."

The value of money, and the increase of our opulence, might form, says Johnson, a curious

subject of research. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, Latimer mentions it as a proof of her father's prosperity, that though but a yeoman, he gave his daughters five pounds each for their portion. At the latter end of Elizabeth's reign, seven hundred pounds were such a temptation to courtship, as made all other motives suspected. Congreve makes twelve thousand pounds more than a counterbalance to the affectation of Belinda. No poet will now fly his favourite character at less than fifty thousand. Clarissa Harlowe had but a moderate fortune.

In Sir John Vanburgh's Confederacy, a woman of fashion is presented with a bill of millinery *as long as herself*.—Yet it only amounts to a poor fifty pounds! at present this sounds oddly on the stage. I have heard of a lady of quality and fashion, who had a bill of her fancy-dress maker, for the expenditure of one year, to the tune of, or rather, which closed in the deep diapason of, six thousand pounds!

THE EARLY DRAMA.

It is curious to trace the first rude attempts of the drama, in various nations; to observe at that moment, how crude is the imagination, and to trace the caprices it indulges; and that the

resemblance in these attempts holds in the earliest essays of Greece, of France, of Spain, of England, and, what appears extraordinary, even in China and Mexico.

The rude beginnings of the drama in Greece are sufficiently known, and the old *mysteries* of Europe have been amply exhibited to the reader in the first volume of this work. The progress of the French Theatre has been this:—

Etienne Jodelle, in 1552, seems to have been the first who had a tragedy represented of his own invention, entitled Cleopatra—it was a servile imitation of the form of the Grecian tragedy; but if this did not require the highest genius, it did the utmost intrepidity; for the people were, through long habit, intoxicated with the wild amusement they amply received from their farces and moralities.

The following curious anecdote, which followed this first attempt at classical imitation, is very observable. Jodelle's success was such, that his rival poets, touched by the spirit of the Grecian muse, shewed a singular proof of their enthusiasm for this new poet, in a *classical* festivity, which gave room for no little scandal in that day; yet as it was produced by a carnival, it was probably a kind of drunken bout. Fifty poets, during the carnival of 1552, went to Arcueil. Chance, says the writer of the life of

the old French Bard Ronsard, this poet was one of the present *profane* party, threw across their road a *goat*—which having caught, they ornamented the goat with chaplets of flowers, and carried it triumphantly to the Hall of their festival, to appear to sacrifice to Bacchus, and to present it to Jodelle; for the goat, among the ancients, was the prize of the tragic Bards; the victim of Bacchus, who presided over tragedy.

Carmine, qui tragico, vilem certavit ob hircum.
HORACE.

This goat, thus adorned, and his beard painted, was hunted about the long table, at which the fifty poets were seated; and after having served them for a subject of laughter for some time, he was hunted out of the room, and not sacrificed to Bacchus. Each of the guests made verses on the occasion, in imitation of the Bacchanalia of the Ancients. Ronsard composed some dithyrambics to celebrate the festival of the goat of Etienne Jodelle; and another, entitled "Our travels to Arcueil." However, this Bacchanalian freak did not finish as it ought, where it had begun, among the poets. Several ecclesiastics sounded the alarm, and one Chandieu accused Ronsard with having performed an idolatrous sacrifice; and it was so easy to accuse the moral habits of *fifty poets*

assembled together, who were far, probably, from being irreproachable. They repented for some time of their classical sacrifice of a goat to Tragedy.

Hardi, the French Lope de Vega, wrote 800 dramatic pieces from 1600 to 1637; his imagination was the most fertile possible; but so wild and unchecked, that while its extravagancies are very amusing, they also served as so many instructive lessons to his successors. One may form a notion of his violation of the unities by his piece, "La Force du Sang." In the first act Leocadia is carried off and ravished. In the second she is sent back with an evident sign of pregnancy. In the third she lies in, and at the close of this act, her son is about ten years old. In the fourth, the father of the child acknowledges him; and in the fifth, lamenting his son's unhappy fate, he marries Leocadia. Such are the pieces in the infancy of the drama.

Rotrou was the first who ventured to introduce several persons in the same scene; before his time they rarely exceeded two persons; if a third appeared, he was usually a mute actor, who never joined the other two. The state of the theatre was even then very rude; freedoms of the most lascivious embraces were publicly given and taken; and Rotrou even ventured to introduce a naked page in the scene; who, in

this situation holds a dialogue with one of his heroines. In another piece, "*Scedase, ou l'hospitalité violeé,*" Hardy makes two young Spartans carry off Scedase's two daughters, ravish them on the theatre, and, violating them in the side scenes, the spectators heard their cries and their complaints. Cardinal Richelieu made the theatre one of his favourite pursuits, and though not successful as a dramatic writer, he gave that encouragement to the drama, which gradually gave birth to genius. Scudery was the first who introduced the twenty-four hours from Aristotle; and Mairet studied the construction of the fable, and the rules of the drama. They yet groped in the dark, and their beauties were yet only occasional; Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Crebillon, and Voltaire, perfected the French drama.

In the infancy of the tragic art in our country, the bowl and dagger were considered as the great instruments of a sublime pathos; and the "*Die all*" and "*Die nobly*" of the exquisite and affecting tragedy of Fielding were frequently realised in our popular dramas. Thomas Goff, of the university of Oxford, in the reign of James I. was considered as no contemptible tragic poet; he concludes the first part of his courageous Turk, by promising a second, thus:

If this first part, gentles! do like you well
The second part shall *greater murthers* tell.

Specimens of extravagant bombast might be selected from his tragedies. The following speech of Amurath the Turk, who coming on the stage, and seeing "an appearance of the heavens being on fire, comets and blazing stars, thus addresses the heavens," which seem to have been in as mad a condition as the poet's own mind.

——How now ye heavens! grow you
So proud, that you must needs *put on curled locks*,
And clothe yourselves in *perriwigs of fire!*

In the raging Turk, or Bajazet the Second, he is introduced with this most raging speech:

Am I not Emperor? he that breaths a no
Damns in that negative syllable his soul;
Durst any God gainsay it, he should feel
The strength of fiercest giants in my armies,
Mine anger 's at the highest, and I could shake
The firm foundation of the earthly globe:
Could I but grasp the poles in these two hands
I 'd pluck the world asunder.

He would scale heaven, and would then when he had
——————— got beyond the utmost sphere,
Besiege the concave of this universe,
And hunger-starve the Gods till they confessed
What furies did oppress his sleeping soul.

These plays went through two editions; the last printed in 1656.

The following passage from a similar bard is s precious. The King in the play exclaims,

> By all the ancient Gods of Rome and Greece,
> I love my daughter!——better than my niece!
> If any one should ask the reason why,
> I 'd tell them——Nature makes the strongest tie!

One of these rude French plays, about 1600, is entitled "*La Rebellion, ou mescontentement des Grenouilles contre Jupiter*," in five acts. The subject of this tragi-comic piece, is nothing more than the fable of the Frogs who asked Jupiter for a king. In this ridiculous effusion of a wild fancy, it must have been pleasant enough to have seen the actors, croaking in their fens, and climbing up the steep ascent of Olympus; they were dressed so as to appear gigantic frogs; and in pleading their cause before Jupiter and his court, the dull humour was to croak sublimely, whenever they did not agree with their judge.

Clavigero, in his curious history of Mexico, has given Acosta's account of the Mexican theatre, which appears to resemble the first scenes among the Greeks, and these French frogs, but with more fancy and taste. Acosta writes, "The small Theatre was curiously whitened, adorned with boughs, and arches made of flowers and feathers, from which were suspended many

birds, rabbits, and other pleasing objects. The actors exhibited burlesque characters, feigning themselves deaf, sick with colds, lame, blind, crippled, and addressing an idol for the return of health. The deaf people answered at cross purposes; those who had colds by coughing; and the lame by halting; all recited their complaints and misfortunes, which produced infinite mirth among the audience. Others appeared under the names of different little animals; some disguised as beetles, some like toads, some like lizards, and upon encountering each other, reciprocally explained their employments, which was highly satisfactory to the people, as they performed their parts with infinite ingenuity. Several little boys also belonging to the temple, appeared in the disguise of butterflies, and birds of various colours, and mounting upon the trees which were fixed there on purpose, little balls of earth were thrown at them with slings, occasioning many humorous incidents to the spectators."

Something very wild and original appears in this singular exhibition; where at times the actors seem to have been spectators, and the spectators were actors.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE ARTS.

As a literary curiosity can we deny a niche to that "obliquity of distorted wit," of Barton Holyday, who has composed a strange comedie, in five acts, performed at Christ Church, Oxford, 1630, *not* for the *entertainment*, as an anecdote records, of James the First.

The title of the comedy of this unclassical classic, for Holyday is known as the translator of Juvenal with a very learned commentary, is TEXNOΓAMIA, or the Marriage of the Arts, 1630, quarto, extremely dull, excessively rare, and extraordinarily high-priced among collectors.

It may be exhibited as one of the most extravagant inventions of a pedant. Who but a pedant could have conceived the dull fancy of forming a comedy, of five acts, on the subject of *marrying the Arts!* They are the dramatis personæ of this piece, and the bachelor of arts describes their intrigues and characters. His actors are Polites, a magistrate;—Physica—Astronomia, daughter to Physica;—Ethicus, an old man;—Geographus, a traveller and courtier, in love with Astronomia;—Arithmetica, in love with Geometry,—Logicus;—Grammaticus, a

schoolmaster,—Poeta;—Historia, in love with Poetica;—Rhetorica, in love with Logicus; Melancholico, Poeta's man;—Phantastes, servant to Geographus;—Choler, Grammaticus's man.

All these refined and abstract ladies and gentlemen have as bodily feelings, and employ as gross language, as if they had been every-day characters. A specimen of his grotesque dulness may entertain; "fruits of dull heat, and sooterkins of wit."

Geographus opens the play with declaring his passion to Astronomia, and that very rudely indeed! See the pedant wreathing the roses of Love!

"*Geog.* Come, now you shall, Astronomia.

Ast. What shall I, Geographus?

Geog. Kisse!

Ast. What in spite of my teeth!

Geog. No, not so! I hope you do not use to kisse with your teeth.

Ast. Marry, and I hope I do not use to kisse without them.

Geog. Ay, but my fine wit-catcher, I mean you do not shew your teeth when you kisse."

He then kisses her, as he says, in the different manners of a French, Spanish, and Dutch kiss. He wants to take off the zone of Astronomia. She begs he would not fondle her like

an elephant as he is; and Geographus says again, "Won't you then?

Ast. Won't I what?

Geog. Bee kinde?

Ast. Bee kinde? how?"

Fortunately Geographus is here interrupted by Astronomia's mother Physica. This dialogue is a specimen of the whole piece: very flat, and very gross. Yet the piece is still curious, —not only for its absurdity, but for that sort of ingenuity which so whimsically contrived to bring together the different arts; this pedantic writer, however, owes more to the subject, than the subject derived from him; without wit or humour, he has at times an extravagance of invention. As for instance,—Geographus, and his man Phantastes, describe to Poeta the lying wonders they pretend to have witnessed; and this is one:

"*Phan.* Sir, we met with a traveller that could speak six languages at the same instant.

Poeta. How? at the same instant, that's impossible!

Phan. Nay, sir, the actuality of the performance puts it beyond all contradiction. With his tongue he'd so vowel you out as smooth *Italian* as any man breathing; with his eye he would sparkle forth the proud *Spanish*; with his nose blow out most robustious *Dutch*; the creaking

of his high-heeled shoe would articulate exact *Polonian;* the knocking of his shin-bone feminine *French;* and his belly would grumble most pure and scholar-like *Hungary.*"

This, though extravagant without fancy, is not the worst part of the absurd humour which runs through this pedantic comedy.

The classical reader may perhaps be amused by the following strange conceits. Poeta, who was in love with Historia, capriciously falls in love with Astronomia, and thus compares his mistress:

Her *brow* is like a brave *heroic* line
That does a sacred majestie inshrine;
Her *nose, Phaleuciake*-like, in comely sort;
Ends in a *Trochie,* or a long and short.
Her *mouth* is like a prettie *Dimeter;*
Her *eie-brows* like a little-longer *Trimeter.*
Her *chinne* is an *adonicke,* and her *tongue*
Is an *Hypermeter,* somewhat too long.
Her *eies* I may compare them unto two
Quick-turning *dactyles,* for their nimble view.
Her *ribs* like staues of *Sapphicks* doe descend
Thither, which but to name were to offend.
Her *arms* like two *Iambics* raised on hie,
Doe with her brow bear equal majestie;
Her *legs* like two straight *spondees* keep apace;
Slow as two scazons, but with stately grace.

The piece concludes with a speech by Polites, who settles all the disputes, and loves, of the

Arts. Poeta promises for the future to attach himself to Historia. Rhetorica, though she loves Logicus, yet as they do not mutually agree, she is united to Grammaticus. Polites counsels Phlegmatico, who is Logicus's man, to leave off smoaking, and to learn better manners; and Choler, Grammaticus's man, to bridle himself;—that Ethicus and Œconoma, would vouchsafe to give good advice to Poeta and Historia;—and Physica to her children Geographus and Astronomia; for Grammaticus and Rhetoric, he says, their tongues will always agree and will not fall out; and for Geometres and Arithmetica they will be very regular. Melancholico, who is Poeta's man, is left quite alone, and agrees to be married to Musica; and at length Phantastes, by the intreaty of Poeta, becomes the servant of Melancholico and Musica. Physiognomus and Cheiromantes, who are in the characters of Gypsies and Fortune-tellers, are finally exiled from the Island of Fortunata, where lies the whole scene of the action in this residence of the *married arts*.

The pedant-comic-writer has even attended to the dresses of his characters, which are minutely given. Thus Melancholico wears a black suit, a black hat, a black cloak, and black worked band, black gloves, and black shoes. Sanguis, the servant of Medicus, is in a red

suit; on the breast is a man with his nose bleeding; on the back, one letting blood in his arm: with a red hat and band, red stockings, and red pumps.

It is recorded of this play, that the Oxford scholars resolving to give James I. a relish of their genius, requested leave to act this notable piece. Honest Anthony Wood tell us, that it being too grave for the King, and too scholastic for the Auditory, or, as some have said, the actors had taken too much wine, his majesty offered several times, after two acts, to withdraw. He was prevailed to sit it out, in mere charity to the Oxford scholars. The following humorous epigram was produced on the occasion:

> At *Christ church marriage* done before the King,
> Least that those mates should want *an offering*,
> The King himself *did offer*;—What, I pray?
> He *offered twice or thrice*—to go away!

A CONTRIVANCE IN DRAMATIC DIALOGUE.

Crown, in his "City Politiques," 1688, a comedy written to satirise the Whigs of those days, was accused of having copied his character too closely after life, and his enemies turned his comedy into a libel. He has defended

himself in his preface from this imputation. It was particularly laid to his charge that in the characters of Bartoline, an old corrupt Lawyer, and his wife, Lucinda, a wanton country girl, he intended to ridicule a certain serjeant M—— and his young wife. It was even said that the comedian mimicked the odd speech of the aforesaid serjeant, who having lost all his teeth, uttered his words in a very peculiar manner. On this, Crown tells us in his defence, that the comedian must not blamed for this peculiarity, as it was an *invention* of the author himself, who had taught it to the player. He seems to have considered it as no ordinary invention, and was so pleased with it, that he has most painfully printed the speeches of the Lawyer in this singular gibberish; and his reasons, as well as his discovery, appear very remarkable.

He says that "Not any one old man more than another, is mimiqued, by Mr. Lee's way of speaking, which all comedians can witness, was my own *invention*, and Mr. Lee was taught it by me. To prove this farther, I have *printed* Bartoline's part in that manner of spelling, by which I taught it Mr. Lee. They who have no teeth cannot pronounce many letters plain, but perpetually lisp, and break their words; and some words they cannot bring out at all. As for instance, *th* is pronounced by thrusting the

tongue hard to the teeth, therefore that sound they cannot make, but something like it. 'For that reason you will often find in Bartoline's part, instead of *th*, *ay*, as *yat*, for that; *yish*, for this; *yosh* for those; sometimes a *t* is left out, as *houshand*, for thousand; *hirty*, for thirty. *S* they pronounce like *sh*, as *sher* for *sir*; *musht* for must; *t*, they speak like *ch*; therefore you will find *chrue* for true; *chreason* for treason; *cho* for to; *choo* for two; *chen* for ten; *chake* for take. And this *ch* is not to be pronounced like *k*, as 'tis in christian, but as in child, church, chest. I desire the reader to observe these things, because otherwise he will hardly understand much of the lawyer's part, which in the opinion of all, is the most divertising in the comedy; but when this ridiculous way of speaking is familiar with him, it will render the part more pleasant."

One hardly expects so curious a piece of orthoepy in the preface to a comedy. It may have required great observation and ingenuity to have discovered the cause of old toothless men mumbling their words. But as a piece of comic humour, on which the author appears to have prided himself, the effect is surely not fortunate; such a kind of humour, arising from an unfortunate defect, is but a miserable substitute for that of a more genuine kind. I shall give a

specimen of this strange gibberish as it is so laboriously printed. It may amuse the reader to see his mother's language transformed into so odd a shape that it is with difficulty he can recognise it.

Old Bartoline thus speaks:—"I wrong'd *my shelf, cho entcher incho bondsh* of marriage, and could not perform *covenantsh*, I might well *hinke* you would *chake* the forfeiture of the bond; and I never found *equichy* in a *bedg* in my life; but i'll trounce you *boh;* I have paved *jaylsh* wi' the *bonesh* of honester people *yen* you are, *yat* never did me nor any man any wrong, but had law o'*yeir shydsh* and right o'*yeir shydsh*, but cause *yey* had not me o'*yeir shydsh*, I ha' '*hrown* 'em in *jaylish*, and got *yeir eshchatsh* for my *clyentsh*, *yat* had no more *chytle* to 'em *yen dogsh*.

THE COMEDY OF A MADMAN.

Desmarets, the friend of Richelieu, mentioned in the article Richelieu, Vol. I. p. 234, was a very extraordinary character, and produced many effusions of genius in early life, till he became a mystical fanatic. It was said of him, that "he was the greatest madman among poets, and the best poet among madmen." His

comedy of "The Visionaries" is one of the most extraordinary of dramatic projects, and in respect to its genius and lunacy, may be considered as a literary curiosity.

In this singular comedy all Bedlam seems to be let loose on the stage, and every character has a high claim to an apartment in it. It is indeed suspected that the Cardinal had a hand in this anomalous drama, and in spite of its extravagance it was favourably received by the public, who certainly had never seen any thing like it.

Every character in this piece acts under some hallucination of the mind, or a fit of madness. Artabaze, is a cowardly hero, who believes he has conquered the world. Amidor, is a wild poet, who imagines he ranks above Homer. Filidan, is a lover who becomes inflammable as gun-powder, for every mistress he reads of in romances. Phalante, is a beggarly bankrupt who thinks himself as rich as Crœsus. Melisse, in reading the "History of Alexander," has become madly in love with this hero, and will have no other husband than "him of Macedon." Hesperie imagines her fatal charms occasion a hundred disappointments in the world, but prides herself on her perfect insensibility. Sestiane, who knows no other happiness than comedies, and whatever she sees or hears imme-

diately plans a scene for dramatic effect, renounces any other occupation; and finally, Alcidon, the father of these three mad girls, as imbecile as his daughters are wild. So much for the amiable characters!

The plot is in perfect harmony with the genius of the author, and the characters he has invented—perfectly unconnected, and fancifully wild. Alcidon resolves to marry his three daughters, who, however, have no such project of their own. He offers them to the first who comes. He accepts for his son-in-law the first who offers, and is clearly convinced that he is within a very short period of accomplishing his wishes. As the four ridiculous personages whom we have noticed frequently haunt his house, he becomes embarrassed in finding one lover too many, having only three daughters. The catastrophe relieves the old gentleman from his embarrassments. Melisse, faithful to her Macedonian hero, declares her resolution of dying, before she marries any meaner personage. Hesperie refuses to marry out of pity for mankind; for to make one man happy, she thinks she must plunge a hundred into despair. Sestiane, only passionate for comedy, cannot consent to any marriage, and tells her father, in very lively verses,

Je ne veux point men pere, espouser un censeur;
Puisque vous me souffres recevoir la douceur
Des plaisirs innocens que le theatre apporte,
Prendreis-je le hazard de vivre d'autre sorte?
Puis on a des enfans, qui vous sont sur les bras,
Les mener au theatre, O Dieux! quel embarrass!
Tantot couche ou grossesse, ou quelque maladie
Pour jamais vous font dire, adieu la comedie!

IMITATED.

No, no, my father, I will have no critic,
(Miscalled a husband) since you still permit
The innocent sweet pleasures of the Stage;
And shall I venture to exchange my lot?
Then we have children folded in our arms
To bring them to the play-house; heavens! what troubles!
Then we lie in, are big, or sick, or vexed:
These make us bid farewell to Comedy!

At length these imagined sons-in-law appear: Folidan declares that in these three Girls he cannot find the mistress he adores. Amidor confesses he only asked for one of his daughters out of pure gallantry, and that he is only a lover —in verse! When Phalante is questioned after the great fortunes he hinted at, the father discovers that he has not a stiver, and out of credit to borrow; while Artabaze declares that he only allowed Alcidon, out of mere benevolence, to flatter himself for a moment, with the hope of an honour, that even Jupiter would not dare to pretend to. Thus it is, that the four lovers disperse, and leave the old gentleman more

embarrassed than ever, and his daughters perfectly enchanted to enjoy their whimsical reveries, and die old maids.

SOLITUDE.

We possess, among our own native treasures, two treatises on this subject, composed with no ordinary talent, and not their least value consists in one being an apology for solitude, while the other combats that prevailing passion of the studious. Zimmerman's popular work is overloaded with common-place; the garrulity of eloquence, which has been found very agreeable to the great mass of readers. The two treatises now noticed, may be compared to the highly-finished gems, whose figure may be more finely designed, and whose strokes may be more delicate in the smaller space they occupy, than the ponderous block of marble hewed out by the German chiseller.

Sir George Mackenzie, a polite writer and a most eloquent pleader, published in 1665 a moral essay, preferring Solitude to public employment. The eloquence of his style was well suited to the dignity of his subject; the advocates for solitude have always prevailed over those for active life, because there is something sublime in those feelings which would retire

from the circle of indolent triflers, or depraved geniuses; who, like a certain species of insects, are born, and can only live, in corruption. The tract of Mackenzie was ingeniously answered by the elegant taste of John Evelyn, in 1667; of this last tract, the editor of "Censura Literaria," in his first volume, has given an analysis; but that ingenious and fervent compiler has not noticed the superior composition of the Scotch writer. Mackenzie, though he wrote in favour of solitude, passed a very active life, first as a pleader, and afterwards as a judge; that he was an eloquent writer, and an excellent critic, and a wit, we have the authority of Dryden, who says, that till he was acquainted with that noble wit of Scotland, Sir George Mackenzie, he had not known the beautiful turn of words and thoughts in poetry, which Sir George had explained and exemplified to him in conversation. As a judge, and King's advocate, will not the barbarous customs of the age defend his name? he is most hideously painted forth by the dark pencil of a poetical Spagnoletti—Mr. Grahame, in his recent poem, "The Birds of Scotland," p. 25. Sir George lived in the age of rebellion—and used torture; we must entirely put aside his political, to attend to his literary character. Blair has quoted his pleadings as a model of eloquence, and Mr.

Grahame is unjust to the fame of Mackenzie, when he alludes to his "half-forgotten name." In 1689, he retired to Oxford, to indulge the luxuries of study in the Bodleian Library, and to practise that solitude which so delighted him in theory; but three years afterwards he fixed himself in London. Evelyn, who wrote in favour of public employment being preferable to solitude, passed his days in the tranquillity of his studies, and wrote against the habits which he himself most loved. By this it may appear, that, that of which we have the least experience ourselves, will ever be what must appear most delightful! Alas! every thing in life seems to have in it the nature of a bubble of air, and, when touched, we find nothing but emptiness in our hand. It is certain that the most eloquent writers in favour of solitude, have left behind them too many memorials of their unhappy feelings, when they indulged this passion to excess; and some ancient has justly said, that none but a God, or a savage, can suffer this exile from human nature.

The following extracts from Sir George Mackenzie's tract on Solitude, are eloquent and impressive, and merit to be rescued from that oblivion which surrounds many writers, whose genius has not been effaced, but concealed, by the transient crowd of their posterity.

"I have admired to see persons of virtue and humour long much to be in the City, where, when they come, they found nor sought for no other divertisement than to visit one another; and there to do nothing else than to make legs, view others habit, talk of the weather, or some such pitiful subject, and it may be, if they made a farther inroad upon any other affair, they did so pick one another, that it afforded them matter of eternal quarrel; for what was at first but an indifferent subject, is by interest adopted into the number of our quarrels.—What pleasure can be received by talking of new fashions, buying and selling of lands, advancement or ruin of favourites, victories or defeats of strange Princes, which is the ordinary subject of ordinary conversation?—Most desire to frequent their superiors, and these men must either suffer their raillery, or must not be suffered to continue in their society; if we converse with them who speak with more address than ourselves, then we repine equally at our own dullness, and envy the acuteness that accomplishes the speaker; or, if we converse with duller animals than ourselves, then we are weary to draw the yoke alone, and fret at our being in ill company; but if chance blows us in amongst our equals, then we are so at guard to catch all advantages, and so interested in point d'honneur, that it rather cruciates than recreates us. How many make themselves cheap by these occasions, whom we had valued highly if they had frequented us less? And how many frequent persons who laugh at that simplicity which the addresser admires in himself as wit, and yet both recreate themselves with double laughters."

In solitude (he addresses his friend) "My dear Celador enter into your own breast, and there survey the several operations of your own soul, the progress of your passions, the strugglings of your appetite, the wanderings of your fancy, and ye will find, I assure you, more variety in that one piece, than there is to be learned in all the courts of Chris-

tendom. Represent to yourself the last age, all the actions and interests in it, how much this person was infatuate with zeal, that person with lust; how much one pursued honour, and another riches; and in the next thought draw that scene, and represent them all turned to dust and ashes!"

I cannot close this subject without the addition of some anecdotes, which may be useful. A man of letters finds solitude necessary, and for him solitude has its pleasures and its conveniences; but we shall find that it also has a hundred things to be dreaded.

Solitude is indispensable for literary pursuits. No considerable work has yet been composed, but its author, like an ancient magician, retired first to the grove or the closet, to invocate his spirits. Every production of genius must be the production of enthusiasm. When the youth sighs and languishes, and feels himself among crowds in an irksome solitude,—that is the moment to fly into seclusion and meditation. Where can he indulge but in solitude the fine romances of his soul? where but in solitude can he occupy himself in useful dreams by night, and, when the morning rises, fly without interruption to his unfinished labours? Retirement to the frivolous is a vast desert, to the man of genius it is the enchanted garden of Armida.

Cicero was uneasy amidst applauding Rome

and he has designated his numerous works by the titles of his various villas, where they were composed. Voltaire had talents, and a taste for society, yet he not only withdrew by intervals, but at one period of his life passed five years in the most secret seclusion and fervent studies. Montesquieu quitted the brilliant circles of Paris for his books, his meditations, and for his immortal work, and was ridiculed by the gay triflers he relinquished. Harrington, to compose his Oceana, severed himself from the society of his friends, and was so wrapt in abstraction, that he was pitied as a lunatic. Descartes, inflamed by genius, abruptly breaks all his friendly connections, hires an obscure house in an unfrequented corner at Paris, and applies himself to study during two years, unknown to his acquaintance. Adam Smith, after the publication of his first work, throws himself into a retirement that lasted ten years; even Hume rallied him for separating himself from the world; but the great political inquirer satisfied the world, and his friends, by his great work on the Wealth of Nations.

But this solitude, at first a necessity, and then a pleasure, becomes at length not to be born without repining. I will call for a witness a great genius, and he shall speak himself. Gibbon says, " I feel, and shall continue to feel, that

domestic solitude, however it may be alleviated by the world, by study, and even by friendship, is a comfortless state, which will grow more painful as I descend in the vale of years:" Memoirs, Vol. I. p. 216. And afterwards he writes to a friend, "Your visit has only served to remind me that man, however amused and occupied in his closet, was not made to live alone."

I must therefore now sketch a different picture of literary solitude, than some sanguine and youthful minds conceive.

Even the sublimest of men, Milton, who is not apt to vent complaints, appears to have felt this irksome period of life. In the preface to Smectymnus, he says, "It is but justice, not to defraud of due esteem the *wearisome labours* and *studious watchings*, wherein I have spent and *tired* out almost a whole youth."

Solitude in a later period of life, or rather the neglect which awaits the solitary man, is felt with acuter sensibility. Cowley, that enthusiast for rural seclusion, in his retirement calls himself "The melancholy Cowley." Mason has truly transferred the same epithet to Gray. Read in his letters the history of solitude. We lament the loss of Cowley's correspondence through the mistaken notion of Sprat; he assuredly had painted the sorrows of his heart. But Shenstone has filled his pages with the cries of an amiable

being whose soul bleeds in the dead oblivion of solitude. Listen to his melancholy expressions. "Now I am come from a visit, every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce my whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life I now lead, and the life I foresee I shall lead. I am angry, and envious, and dejected, and frantic, and disregard all present things, as becomes a madman to do. I am infinitely pleased (though it is a gloomy joy) with the application of Dr. Swift's complaint, that he is forced to die in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole." Let the lover of solitude muse on its picture throughout the year, in the following stanza by the same poet:

Tedious again to curse the drizzling day,
Again to trace the wintry tracks of snow!
Or, soothed by vernal airs again survey
The self-same hawthorns bud, and cowslips blow!

Swift's letters paint in terrifying colours a picture of solitude, and at length his despair closed with idiotism. The amiable Gresset could not sport with the brilliant wings of his butterfly-muse, without dropping some querulous expression on the solitude of genius. In his "Epistle to his Muse," he exquisitely paints the situation of men of genius:

"————Je les vois, Victimes du genie,
Au foible prix d'un eclat panager,
Vivre isolès, sans jouir de la vie!"

And afterwards he adds,

"'' Vingt ans d'Ennuis, pour quelque jours de gloire!"

I shall now finish with one more anecdote, which may amuse the reader. When Menage, attacked by some, and abandoned by others, was seized by a splenetic humour, he retreated into the country, and gave up his famous Mercuriales: those Wednesdays when the Literati assembled at his house, to praise up or cry down one another, as is usual with the literary populace. Menage expected to find that tranquillity in the country which he had frequently described in his verses; but as he was only a poetical plagiarist, it is not strange our pastoral writer was greatly disappointed. Some country rogues having killed his pigeons, they gave him more vexation than his critics. He hastened his return to Paris. It is better, he cried, since we are born to suffer, to feel only reasonable sorrows.

LITERARY FRIENDSHIPS.

A DELIGHTFUL topic opens to our contemplations. I enter the scene, as Æneas the green Elysium, where he viewed the once illustrious inhabitants of the earth reposing in social felicity.

It is honourable to literature, that among the virtues it inspires is that of the most romantic friendship; and literary history presents some instances of its finest enthusiasm. The delirium of love is often too violent a passion for the student; and its caprices are still more incompatible with his pursuits than his delirium. But friendship is not only delightful, but necessary to soothe a mind alternately elated and depressed: when the mind of a man of genius is infirm, it strengthens; when dubious, it enlightens; when discouraged, it animates. However, literary friendships are rarer than one might imagine them to be.

The memorable friendship of Beaumont and Fletcher so closely united their labours, that we cannot discover the productions of either; and biographers cannot without difficulty compose the memoirs of the one, without running into the life of the other. They pourtrayed the same characters, while they mingled sentiment with sentiment, and their days were as closely interwoven as their verses. Metastasio and Farinelli were born about the same time, and early acquainted. They called one another *Gemello*, or twin! Both the delight of Europe, both lived to an advanced age, and died nearly at the same time. Their fortune bore, too, a resemblance; for they were both pensioned, but

lived and died separated in the distant courts of Vienna and Madrid. Montaigne and Charron were rivals, but always friends; such was Montaigne's affection for Charron, that he permitted him by his will to bear the full arms of his family; and Charron evinced his gratitude to the manes of his departed friend, by leaving his fortune to the sister of Montaigne, who had married. Forty years of friendship, uninterrupted by rivalry or envy, crowned the lives of Poggius and Leonard Aretin, two of the illustrious revivers of letters. A singular custom formerly prevailed among our own writers, which was an affectionate tribute to our literary veterans by young writers.—The former adopted the latter by the title of sons. Ben Jonson had twelve of these poetical sons. Walton, the angler, adopted Cotton, the translator of Montaigne.

Among the most fascinating effusions of genius are those little pieces which it consecrates to the cause of friendship. In that poem of Cowley, composed on the death of his friend Harvey, the following stanza presents a pleasing picture of the employments of two young students.—

"Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
"How oft unwearied have we spent the nights!
"Till the Ledæan stars, so famed for lov-
"Wond'red at us from above.

" We spent them not in toys, in lust, or wine·
" But search of deep philosophy,
" Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
" Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine."

Milton has not only given the exquisite Lycidas to the memory of a young friend, but in his *Epitaphium Damonis*, to that of Deodatus, has poured forth some interesting sentiments. It has been versified by Langhorne. Now, says the poet,

" To whom shall I my hopes and fears impart,
" Or trust the cares and follies of my heart."

The elegy of Tickell, maliciously called by Steele, " prose in rhyme," is alike inspired by affection and fancy; it has a melodious languor, and a melancholy grace. The sonnet of Gray to the memory of West, is a beautiful effusion, and a model for English sonnets. Helvetius was the protector of men of genius, whom he assisted not only with his criticism, but his fortune. At his death, Saurin read in the French academy an epistle to the manes of his friend. Saurin, wrestling with obscurity and poverty, had been drawn into literary existence by the supporting hand of Helvetius. Our poet thus addresses him in the warm tones of gratitude:

" C'est toi qui me cherchant au seinde l'infortune
" Relevas mon sort abattu,
" Et seus me rendre chere, une vie importune.

* * *

"Que importent ces pleurs—
"O douleur impuissante! O regrets superflus!
"Je vis, helas! Je vis, et mon ami n'est plus!"

IMITATED.

In Misery's haunts, thy friend thy bounties seize,
And give an urgent life some days of ease;
Ah! ye vain griefs, superfluous tears I chide!
I live, alas! I live, and thou hast died!

The literary friendship of a father with his son is one of the rarest alliances in the republic of letters. It was gratifying to the feelings of young Gibbon, in the fervour of literary ambition, to dedicate his first fruits, to his father. The too lively son of Crebillon, though his was a very different genius to the grandeur of his father's, yet dedicated his works to him, and for a moment put aside his wit and raillery for the pathetic expressions of filial veneration. We have had a remarkable instance in the two Richardsons; and the father, in his original manner, has, in the most glowing language, expressed his affectionate sentiments. He says, "My time of learning was employed in business; but, after all, I have the Greek and Latin tongues, because a part of me possesses them, to whom I can recur at pleasure, just as I have a hand when I would write or paint, feet to walk, and eyes to see. My son is my learning, as I

am that to him which he has not.—We make one man, and such a compound man may probably produce what no single man can." And further, "I always think it my peculiar happiness to be as it were enlarged, expanded, made another man, by the acquisition of my son; and he thinks in the same manner concerning my union with him." This is as curious as it is uncommon; and if the cynic calls it vanity, let us add that it is of the most amiable kind!

But it must not be supposed that men of genius have remained satisfied with only giving a few verses to the tender recollections of friendship.

Some for their friend have died penetrated with inconsolable grief; some have sacrificed their character to preserve his own; some have shared their limited fortune; and some have remained attached to their friend in the cold season of adversity.

Jurieu denounced Bayle as an impious writer, and drew his conclusions from the "Avis aux Refugiés." This work is written against the Calvinists, and therefore becomes impious in Holland. Bayle might have exculpated himself with facility, by declaring the work was composed by La Roque; but he preferred to be persecuted, rather than to ruin his friend; he therefore was silent, and was condemned. When the minister

Fouquet was abandoned by all, it was the men of letters he had patronised who never forsook his prison; and many have dedicated their works to great men in their adversity, whom they scorned to notice at the time when they were noticed by all. The learned Goguet bequeathed his MSS. and library to his friend Fugere, with whom he had united his affections and his studies. His work on the Origin of the Arts and Sciences had been much indebted to his aid. In vain was the legacy bequeathed: Goguet died of a slow and painful disorder; Fugere, who knew him to be past recovery, preserved a mute despair, retired home, and the victim of sensibility, died a few weeks after his friend. The Abbé de Saint Pierre gave an interesting proof of literary friendship. When he was at college, he formed an union with Varignon, the geometrician. They were of congenial dispositions. When he went to Paris, he invited Varignon to accompany him; but Varignon had nothing, and the Abbé was far from rich. A certain income was necessary for the tranquil pursuits of Geometry. Our Abbé had an income of 1800 livres; from this he deducted 300, which he gave to the geometrician, but accompanied by a delicacy which none but a man of genius could conceive. I do not give it you (he said) as a salary, but an annuity, that you may be independent, and quit

me, when you dislike me. Something nearly similar embellishes our own scanty literary history. When Akenside was in great danger of experiencing famine as well as fame, Mr. Dyson allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Of this gentleman, perhaps, nothing is known; yet whatever his life may be, it merits the tribute of the biographer. To close with these honourable testimonies of literary friendship, we must not omit that of Churchill and Lloyd. It is known that when Lloyd heard of the death of our poet, he acted the part which Fugere did to Goguet. I conclude by remarking that the page is crowded, but my memory is by no means exhausted.

The most illustrious of the ancients prefixed the name of some friend to the head of their works.—We too often place that of some patron. They honourably inserted it in their works. When a man of genius, however, shews that he is not less mindful of his social affection than his fame, he is the more loved by his reader. Plato communicated a ray of his glory to his brothers; for in his republic he ascribes some parts to Adimantus and Glauchon; and Antiphon the youngest is made to deliver his sentiments in the Parmenides. To perpetuate the fondness of friendship several authors have entitled their works by the name of some cherished associate. Cicero to his Treatise on Orators

gives the title of Brutus; to that of Friendship Lelius; and to that of Old Age, Cato. They have been imitated by the moderns. The poetical Tasso, to his dialogue on Friendship gave the name of Manso, who was afterwards his affectionate biographer. Sepulveda entitles his treatise on Glory, by the name of his friend Gonsalves. Lociel to his dialogues on the lawyers of Paris prefixes the name of the learned Pasquier.—Thus Plato distinguished his Dialogues by the names of certain persons; the one on Lying is entitled Hippius; on Rhetoric Gorgias, and on Beauty Phædrus.

Luther has perhaps carried this feeling to an extravagant point. He was so delighted by his favourite commentary on the epistle to the Galatians, that he distinguished it by a title of doating fondness; he named it after his wife, and called it his Catharine.

ANECDOTES OF ABSTRACTION OF MIND.

A continuity of attention is one of the grand characteristics of genius, and in proportion to the degree of the intenseness of attraction are its powers often obtained. Quintilian finely observes of this art of meditation, that men of genius command it at all times, and in all

places. In their walks, at table, and in assemblies they turn their eye inwards, and can form an artificial solitude. Some have exercised this power of abstraction to a degree that appears marvellous to volatile spirits, and puny thinkers.

To this patient habit, Newton is indebted for many of his great discoveries; an apple falls upon him in his orchard,—and the system of attraction succeeds in his mind! he observes boys blowing soap bubbles, and the properties of Light display themselves! Of Socrates it is said, that he would frequently remain an entire day and night in the same attitude, absorbed in meditation; and why shall we doubt this, when we know that La Fontaine and Thomson, Descartes and Newton, experienced the same abstraction? Mercator, the celebrated geographer, found such delight in the ceaseless progression of his studies, that he would never willingly quit his maps to take the necessary refreshments of life. In Cicero's Treatise on old Age, Cato applauds Gallus, who, when he sat down to write in the morning, was surprised by the evening; and when he took up his pen in the evening was surprised by the appearance of the morning. Buffon once described these delicious moments with his accustomed eloquence.—"Invention depends on

patience; contemplate your subject long; it will gradually unfold, till a sort of electric spark convulses for a moment the brain, and spreads down to the very heart, a glow of irritation. Then come the luxuries of genius! the true hours for production and composition; hours so delightful that I have spent twelve and fourteen, successively at my writing-desk, and still been in a state of pleasure." It is not surprising that the anecdote related of Marini, the Italian poet, should be true; he was once so absorbed in revising his Adonis, that he suffered his leg to be burnt for some time, without any sensibility.

Abstraction of this sublime kind is the first step to that noble enthusiasm which marks out genius from mankind; it produces those raptures and that intense delight, which some curious facts will explain to us.

Poggius relates of Dante, that he indulged his meditations more strongly than any man he knew; whenever he read he was only alive to what was passing in his mind; to all human concerns, he was, as if they had not been. Dante went one day to a great public procession; he entered the shop of a bookseller to be a spectator of the passing show. He found a book which greatly interested him; he devoured it in silence, and plunged into an abyss of

thought.—On his return he declared that he had neither seen, nor heard, the slightest occurrence of the public exhibition which passed before him. This enthusiasm renders every thing surrounding us as distant as if an immense interval separated us from the scene. A modern astronomer one summer night withdrew to his chamber; the brightness of the heaven shewed a phenomenon. He passed the whole night in observing it, and when they came to him early in the morning and found him in the same attitude, he said, like one who had been recollecting his thoughts for a few moments, "It must be thus; but I'll go to bed before 'tis late!" He had gazed the entire night in meditation, and did not know it.

This intense abstraction operates visibly; this perturbation of the faculties, as might be supposed, affects persons of genius physically. What a forcible description the late Madam Rolland, who certainly was a woman of the first genius, gives of herself on her first reading of Telemachus and Tasso. "My respiration rose; I felt a rapid fire colouring my face, and my voice changing, had betrayed my agitation; I was Eucharis for Telemachus, and Erminia for Tancred; however during this perfect transformation, I did not yet think that I myself was any thing, for any

one. The whole had no connection with myself, I sought for nothing around me; I was them, I saw only the objects which existed for them; it was a dream, without being awakened."—Metastasio describes a similar situation. "When I apply with a little attention, the nerves of my sensorium are put into a violent tumult. I grow as red in the face as a drunkard, and am obliged to quit my work." When Malebranche first took up Descartes on Man, the germ and origin of his philosophy, he was obliged frequently to interrupt his reading by a violent palpitation of the heart. When the first idea of the Essay on the Arts and Sciences rushed on the mind of Rousseau, it occasioned such a feverish agitation that it approached to a delirium.

This delicious inebriation of the imagination occasioned the ancients, who sometimes perceived the effects, to believe it was not short of divine inspiration. Fielding says, "I do not doubt but that the most pathetic and affecting scenes have been writ with tears." He perhaps would have been pleased to have confirmed his observation by the following circumstances. The tremors of Dryden, after having written an Ode, a circumstance tradition has accidentally handed down, were not unusual with him; in the preface to his Tales he tells us

that, in translating Homer he found greater pleasure than in Virgil; but it was not a pleasure without pain: the *continual agitation of the spirits* must needs be a weakener to any constitution, especially in age, and many pauses are required for refreshment betwixt the heats." In writing the ninth scene of the second act of the Olympiad, Metastasio found himself in tears; an effect which afterwards, says Dr. Burney, proved very contagious. It was on this occasion that that tender poet commemorated the circumstance in the following interesting Sonnet.

SONNET FROM METASTASIO.

Scrivendo l'Autore in Vienna l'anno 1733 *la Sua Olimpiade si senti Commosso fino alle lagrime nell' esprimere la divisione di due teneri amici: e meravigliandosi che un falso, e da lui inventato disastro, potesse cagionargli una si vera passione, si fece a riflettere quanto poco ragionevole e solido fondamento passano aver le altre che soglion frequentamente agitarci, nel corso di nostra vita.*

Sogni, e favole io fingo, e pure in carte
Mentre favole, e sogni, orno e disegno,
In lor, (folle ch'io Son!) prendo tal parte
Che del mal che inventai piango, e mi Sdegno.
Ma forse allor che non m'inganna l'arte,
Più Saggio io Sono E l' agitato ingegno
Forse allor più tranquillo? O forse parte
Da più salda cagion l'amor, lo Sdegno?

Ah che non sol quelle, ch'io canto, o scrivo
Favole Son; ma quanto temo, o spero,
Tutt' é menzogna, e delirando io vivo!
Sogno della mia vita, è il corso intero.
Deh tu, Signor, quando a destarmi arrivo
Fa, ch'io trovi riposo in Sen del VERO.

In 1733, *the Author composing his Olympiad, felt himself suddenly moved, even to tears, in expressing the separation of two tender Lovers. Surprised that a fictitious grief, invented too by himself, could raise so true a passion, he reflected how little reasonable and solid a foundation the others had, which so frequently agitated us in this state of our existence.*

SONNET.—IMITATED.

FABLES and dreams I feign; yet though but verse
The dreams and fables that adorn this scroll,
Fond fool, I rave, and grieve as I rehearse;
While GENUINE TEARS, for FANCIED SORROWS roll.
Perhaps the dear delusion of my art
Is wisdom; and the agitated mind,
As still responding to each plaintive part,
With love and rage, a tranquil hour can find.
Ah! not alone the tender RHIMES I give,
Are fictions: but my FEARS and HOPES I deem
Are FABLES all; deliriously I live,
And life's whole course is one protracted dream.
Eternal power! when shall I wake to rest
This wearied brain on TRUTH's immortal breast?

RICHARDSON.

THE censure which the Shakspeare of Novelists has incurred for the tedious procrastination

and the minute details of his fable; his slow unfolding characters, and the slightest gestures of his personages, is extremely unjust; for is it not evident that we could not have his peculiar excellencies without these attendant defects? When characters are very fully delineated, the narrative must be suspended. Whenever the narrative is rapid, which so much delights superficial readers, the characters cannot be very minutely featured; and the writer who aims to instruct (as Richardson avowedly did) by the glow and eloquence of his feelings, must often sacrifice to this, his local descriptions. Richardson himself has given us the principle that guided him in composing. He tells us, "If I give speeches and conversations, I ought to give them justly; for the *humours* and *characters* of persons cannot be known unless I *repeat* what they say, and their *manner* of saying."

Foreign critics have been more just to Richardson than many of his own countrymen. I shall notice the opinions of three celebrated writers, D'Alembert, Rousseau, and Diderot.

D'Alembert was a great mathematician. His literary taste was extremely cold: he was not worthy of reading Richardson. The volumes, if he ever read them, must have fallen from his hands. The delicate and subtle turnings, those folds of the human heart, which require so nice

a touch, was a problem which the Mathematician could never solve. There is no other demonstration in the human heart, but an appeal to its feelings; and what are the calculating feelings of an arithmetician of lines and curves? He therefore declared of Richardson that "La Nature est bonne à imiter, mais non pas jusqu'au l'ennui."

But thus it was not with the other two congenial geniuses! The fervent opinion of Rousseau must be familiar to the reader; but Diderot, in his eloge on Richardson, exceeds even Rousseau in the enthusiasm of his feelings. I extract some of the most interesting passages.

Of Clarissa he says, "I yet remember with delight the first time it came into my hands. I was in the country. How deliciously was I affected! At every moment I saw my happiness abridged by a page. I then experienced the same sensations those feel who have long lived with one they love, and are on the point of separation. At the close of the work I seemed to remain deserted."

The impassioned Diderot then breaks forth; "O Richardson! thou singular genius in my eyes! thou shalt form my reading in all times. If forced by sharp necessity, my friend falls into indigence; if the mediocrity of my fortune is not sufficient to bestow on my children the ne-

cessary cares for their education, I will sell my books,—but thou shalt remain! yes, thou shalt rest in the *same class* with MOSES, HOMER, EURIPIDES, and SOPHOCLES, to be read alternately.

" Oh Richardson, I dare pronounce that the most veritable history is full of fictions, and thy romances are full of truths. History paints some individuals; thou paintest the human species. —History attributes to some individuals, what they have neither said, nor done; all that thou attributest to man, he has said and done. History embraces but a portion of duration, a point on the surface of the globe; thou hast embraced all places and all times. The human heart, which has ever been and ever shall be the same, is the model thou copiest. If we were severely to criticise the best historian, would he maintain his ground as thou? In this point of view, I venture to say, that frequently history is a miserable romance; and romance, as thou hast composed it, is a good history. Painter of nature, thou never liest!

" I have never yet met with a person who shared my enthusiasm, that I was not tempted to embrace, and to press him in my arms!

" Richardson is no more! His loss touches me, as if my brother was no more. I bore him in my heart without having seen him, and knowing him but by his works. He has not had all

the reputation he merited. Richardson! if living, thy merit has been disputed; how great wilt thou appear to our children's children, when they shall view thee at the distance we now view Homer. Then who will dare to steal a line from thy sublime works! Thou hast had more admirers amongst us than in thine own country, and at this I rejoice!"

It is probable that to a Frenchman the *style* of Richardson is not so objectionable when translated, as to ourselves. I think myself, that it is very idiomatic and energetic; others have thought differently. The misfortune of Richardson was, that he was unskilful in the art of writing, and that he could never lay the pen down, till his ink-horn reminded him.

He himself was delighted by his own works. No author enjoyed so much the bliss of excessive fondness. I heard from the late Charlotte Lenox, the anecdote which so severely reprimanded his innocent vanity, and which Boswell has recorded in his Life of Johnson, vol. III. p. 275. This lady was a regular visitor at Richardson's house, and she could scarcely recollect one visit which was not taxed by our author reading one of his voluminous letters, or two or three, if his auditor was quiet and friendly.

The extreme delight which he felt on a review of his own works, the works themselves witness.

Each is an evidence of what some will deem a violent literary vanity. To *Pamela* is prefixed a *letter* from the *editor* (whom we know to be the *author*), consisting of one of the most minutely laboured panegyrics of the work itself, that ever the blindest idolater of some ancient classic paid to the object of his phrenetic imagination. In several places there, he contrives to repeat the striking parts of the narrative, which displays the fertility of his imagination to great advantage. To the author's own edition of his *Clarissa* is appended an *alphabetical arrangement* of the *sentiments* dispersed throughout the work; and such was the fondness that dictated this voluminous arrangement, that such trivial aphorisms as, " habits are not easily changed;" " Men are known by their companions," &c. seem alike to be the object of their author's admiration. This collection of sentiments (said indeed to have been sent to him anonymously) is curious and useful, and shows the value of the work, by the extensive grasp of that mind which could think so forcibly on such numerous topics. And in his third and final labour, to each volume of *Sir Charles Grandison* is not only prefixed a complete *index*, with as much exactness, as if it were a History of England, but there is also appended a *list* of the *similes* and allusions in the volume; some of

which do not exceed *three* or *four* in nearly as many hundred pages.

Literary history does not record a more singular example of that self-delight which an author has felt on a revision of his works. It was this intense pleasure which produced his voluminous labours. It must be confessed some of his readers are in want of some of that genius which makes the mind of Richardson so fertile and prodigal.

THEOLOGICAL STYLE.

In the present volume p. 351, some notice has been taken of the attempts to recompose the Bible, in a finical affected style; but the broad vulgar colloquial diction, used by our theological writers, is less tolerable than the quaintness of Castalion, and the floridity of Pere Berruyer. I omitted to preserve a specimen in its proper place.

The style now noticed was familiar to, and disgraced the writings of, our divines till very lately; and we see it sometimes still employed by some of a certain stamp. Matthew Henry, whose Commentaries are well known, writes in this manner on Judges ix.—"We are here told by what acts Abimelech *got into the saddle.*

—None would have *dreamed* of making such a *fellow* as he, King.—See how he has *wheedled* them into the choice. He hired into his service the *scum* and *scoundrels* of the country. Jotham was really a *fine gentleman.*—The Sechemites that set Abimelech up, were the first to *kick him off.* The Sechemites said all the ill they could of him in their *table-talk;* they *drank healths* to his *confusion.*—Well, Gaal's interest in Sechem is soon at an end. *Exit Gaal!*"

L. Addison, the father of the admirable and refiner writer, was one of the coarsest in point of diction I have met with, even in his own day. He tells us in his voyage to Barbary that "A Rabbin once told him, among other *heinous stuff,* that he did not expect the felicity of the next world on the account of any merits but his own; whoever kept the law would arrive at the bliss, by *coming upon his own legs.*"

It must be confessed that the Rabbin, considering he could not conscientiously have the same creed as Addison, did not deliver any very irrational sentiment, in believing that other people's merits have nothing to do with our own; and that we should stand on our own legs!

INFLUENCE OF NAMES.

What 's in a NAME? That which we call a Rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet.

THE effects which are produced by NAMES on the imagination is one of the most extraordinary illusions of mankind. Favour or disappointment has been often conceded as the *name* of the claimant has affected us; and the accidental affinity or coincidence of a *name*, connected with ridicule or hatred, with pleasure or disgust, have operated like magic. But the facts connected with this subject will shew how this prejudice branches out, and what a variety of forms it assumes. I will only glean from my collections, which might afford the materials of a volume.

The learned Camden, in his "Remaines," has written a Treatise on Names and Surnames, which is useful to the antiquary; and Sterne has touched this subject with exquisite ridicule in his account of the elder Mr. Shandy's system of Christian Names. Whatever wit and satire can urge against this unreasonable propensity of judging by *names* has therefore been happily executed. But it remains for me to state a variety of cases, which may convince readers that

this folly is of far greater extent than they are aware of.

Wilkes has expressed, in Boswell's Life of Johnson, all the influence of *names*, even in matters of poetry. He said, "The last city poet was *Elkanah* Settle. There is *something* in *names* which one cannot help feeling. Now *Elkanah* Settle sounds so queer, who can expect much from *that name?* We should have no hesitation to give it for *John Dryden* in preference to *Elkanah Settle*, from the *names only*, without knowing their different merits."

That there is more truth in this observation than some may be inclined to allow, may be proved by the following facts.—The feeling arises from various causes, chiefly from the association of ideas; but that it affects mankind strongly, all ages and all climates may be called on to testify its truth. As far back as the barbarous age of Louis XI. they felt a delicacy respecting *names*, which we might not be apt to suspect. However, it produced an ordinance from his Majesty. The King's barber was named *Olivier le diable*. At first the King allowed him to get rid of the offensive part by changing it to *le Malin*, but afterwards he found the improvement was not happy; and for a third time he was called *Le Muuvais*. Even this did not answer his purpose; and as he was a

great racer a-foot, he finally had his Majesty's ordinance to be called *Le dain*, under penalty of law if any one should call him *Le Diable*, *Le Malin*, or *Le Mauvais*. According to Platina, Sergius the Second was the first Pope who changed his name in ascending the Papal throne; because his proper name was *Hog's-mouth*, which did not suit with the pomp of the tiara. The ancients felt the same fastidiousness; and among the Romans, those who were called to the equestrian order, having low and vulgar *names*, were new-named on the occasion, lest the *name* should disgrace the dignity.

When *Barbier*, a French wit, was chosen for the preceptor of Colbert's son, he felt his *name* was so uncongenial to his new profession, that he assumed the more splendid one of *D'Aucour*, by which he is now known. Madame *Gomez*, had married a person named *Bonhomme*, but she would never exchange her nobler Spanish name to prefix her married one to her romances, which indicated too much meek humility. *Guez* (a beggar) is a French writer of great pomp and eminence, but he felt such extreme delicacy at so low a name, that to give some authority to the splendour of his diction, he assumed the *name* of his estate; and is well known as *Balzac*. A French poet of the name of Theophile *Viaut*, finding his surname pronounced

like *veau* (calf) exposed him to the infinite jests of the minor wits, silently dropped it, and gave a new value to his poetical effusions by retaining the more poetical appellation of *Theophile.* The learned Baillet has collected various literary artifices employed by some who, still preserving a natural attachment to the names of their fathers, yet blushing at the same time for their meanness, have in their Latin works attempted to obviate the ridicule they provoked. One *Gaucher* (left handed) borrowed the name of *Scevola,* because Scevola, having burnt his right arm, became consequently left-handed. Thus also one *De la Borgne* (one-eyed) called himself *Strabo; De Charpentier* took that of *Fabricius; De Valet* translated his *Servilius;* and an unlucky gentleman, who bore the name of *De bout d'homme,* boldly assumed that of *Virulus.* Dorat, a French poet, had for his real name *Disnemandi,* which, in the dialect of the Limousins, signifies one who dines in the morning: that is, who has no other dinner than his breakfast. This degrading name he changed to *Dorat,* or gilded, a nickname which one of his ancestors had borne for his fair tresses. But by changing his *name,* his feelings were not entirely quieted, for unfortunately his daughter cherished an invincible passion for a learned man, who unluckily was named *Goulu:* that is, a

shark, or gluttonous as a shark. Miss *Disnemandi* felt naturally a strong attraction for so deep a throat, or a *goulu*; and in spite of her father's remonstrances, she once more renewed his sorrows in this alliance!

There are unfortunate names, which are very injurious to the cause in which they are engaged; for instance, the long parliament in Cromwell's time, called by derision, the *Rump*, was headed by one *Barebones*, a leatherseller. It was afterwards called by his unlucky name, which served to heighten the ridicule cast over it by the nation.

There was formerly a custom with learned men to change their names. They shewed at once their contempt for vulgar names and their ingenious erudition. They christened themselves with Latin and Greek, and this disguising of names came, at length, to be considered to have a political tendency, and so much alarmed Paul the Second, that he imprisoned several persons for their using certain affected names, and some, indeed, which they could not give a reason why they assumed. *Desiderius Erasmus* was a name formed out of his family name *Gerard*, which in Dutch signifies amiable; or GAR *all*, AERD *nature*. He first changed it to a Latin word of much the same signification, *desiderius*, which afterwards he refined into the

Greek *Erasmus*, by which names he is now known. The celebrated *Reuchlin*, which in German signifies *smoke*, considered it more dignified to smoke in Greek, by the name of *Capnio*. An Italian physician of the name of *Senza Malizia* prided himself as much on his translating it into the Greek *Akakia*, as the works which he has given under that name. One of the most amiable of the reformers was originally named *Hertz Schwarts* (black earth), but which he elegantly turned into the Greek name of *Melancthon*. The real and vulgar name of a great Italian poet was *Trapasso*, but when his patron, the learned Gravina, resolved to devote the youth to the muses, he gave him a mellifluous name, which they have long known and cherished—*Metastasio*.

Harsh names will have, in spite of all our philosophy, a painful and ludicrous effect on our ears and our associations; it is vexatious that the softness of delicious vowels, or the ruggedness of inexorable consonants, should at all be connected with a man's happiness, or even have an influence on his fortune.

The actor *Macklin* was softened down from *Macklaughlin*, as *Malloch* was polished to *Mallet*; and even our sublime Milton, in a moment of humour and hatred to the Scots, condescends to insinuate that their barbarous names are sym-

bolical of their natures,—and from a man of the name of *Mac Colleittok*, he expects no mercy. Virgil when young, formed a design of a national poem, but was soon discouraged from proceeding, merely by the roughness and asperity of the old Roman names, such as *Decius Mus; Lucumo; Vibius Caudex.* The same thing has happened to a friend who began an Epic on the subject of *Drake's* discoveries; the name of the hero often will produce a ludicrous effect, but one of the most unlucky of his chief heroes, must be one of the name of *Doughty!* One of Blackmore's chief heroes in his Alfred, is named *Gunter;* a printer's erratum might *have proved* fatal to all his heroism; as it is, he makes a sorry appearance. Metastasio found himself in the same situation. In one of his letters he writes, "The title of my new Opera is *Il Re Pastor.* The chief incident is the restitution of the kingdom of Sidon to the lawful heir; a Prince with such a *hypochondriac name,* that he would have disgraced the title-page of any piece; who would have been able to bear an Opera entitled *L'Abdolonimo?* I have contrived to name him as seldom as possible." So true is it, as the caustic Boileau exclaims of an Epic poet of his days, who had shewn some dexterity in cacophony, and none in euphony, when he chose his hero—

O le plaisant projet d'un Poete ignorant
Qui de tant de heros va choisir *Childebrand*;
D'un seul nom quelquefois le son dur et bizarre
Rend un poeme entier, ou burlesque ou barbarre.
Art Poetique, CIII. v. 241.

" In such a croud the Poet were to blame
To chuse *King Chilperic* for his hero's name."
Sir W. Soames.

This Epic Poet perceiving the town joined in the severe raillery of the poet, published a long defence of his hero's name; but the town was inexorable, and the epic poet afterwards changed *Childebrand's* name to *Charles Martel*, which probably was discovered to have something more humane. Corneille's *Pertharite* was an unsuccessful tragedy, and Voltaire deduces its ill-fortune partly from its barbarous *names*, such as *Garibald* and *Edvige*. Voltaire in giving the *names* of the founders of Helvetic freedom, says the difficulty of pronouncing these respectable names is injurious to their celebrity; they are *Melchtad*, *Stauffacher*, and *Valtherfurst*.

We almost hesitate to credit what we know to be true, that the *length* or the *shortness* of a *name* can seriously influence the mind. But history records many facts of this nature. Some nations have long cherished a feeling that there is a certain elevation or abasement in proper names. Montaigne on this subject says, " A

gentleman, one of my neighbours, in overvaluing the excellencies of old times, never omitted noticing the pride and magnificence of the *names* of the nobility of those days; Don *Grumedan, Quadragan, Argesilan,* when fully sounded, were evidently men of another stamp, than *Peter, Giles,* and *Michel.*" What could be hoped for from the names of Ebenezer, Malachi, and Methusalem? The Spaniards have long been known for cherishing a passion for dignified names, and are marvellously affected by long and voluminous ones; to enlarge them they often add the places of their residence. We ourselves seem affected by triple names; and the authors of certain periodical publications, always assume for their *nom de guerre,* a triple name, which doubtless raises them much higher in their reader's esteem, than a mere christian and surname. Many Spaniards have given themselves *names* from some remarkable incident in their lives. One took the name of the Royal Transport for having conducted the Infanta in Italy. Orendayes, added de La Paz, for having signed the peace in 1725. Navarro after a naval battle off Toulon, added la Vittoria, though he had remained in safety at Cadiz while the French Admiral Le Court had fought the battle, which was entirely in favour of the English. A favourite of the King of Spain, a

a great genius, and the friend of Farinelli, but who had sprung from a very obscure origin, to express his contempt of these empty and haughty *names*, assumed, when called to the administration, that of the Marquis of *La Ensenada* (nothing in himself).

But the influence of *long names* is of very ancient standing. Lucian notices one *Simon*, who coming to a great fortune aggrandised his name to *Simonides*. *Dioclesian* had once been plain *Diocles*, before he was Emperor. When *Bruna* became Queen of France, it was thought proper to convey some of the regal pomp in her name by calling her *Brunehault*.

The Spaniards then must feel a most singular contempt for a *very short name*, and on this subject Fuller has recorded a pleasant fact. An opulent citizen of the name of *John Cuts* (what name can be more unluckily short?) was ordered by Elizabeth to receive the Spanish Ambassador; but the latter complained grievously, and thought he was disparaged by the *shortness* of his *name*. He imagined that a man bearing a monosyllabic name, could never in the great alphabet of civil life, have performed any thing great or honourable; but when he found that honest *John Cuts* displayed a hospitality which had nothing monosyllabic in it, he groaned only at the utterance of the *name* of his host.

There are *names* indeed which in the social circle will in spite of all due gravity awaken a harmless smile, and Shenstone solemnly thanked God that his name was not liable to a pun. There are some names which excite horror, such as Mr. Stab-back; others contempt, as Mr. Twopenny; and others of vulgar or absurb signification, subject too often to the insolence of domestic witlings, which occasions irritation even in the minds of worthy, but suffering, men.

There is an association of pleasing ideas with certain *names*; and in the literary world they produce a fine effect. *Bloomfield* is a name which could not have been apter, had the most laborious ingenuity been exerted to have given that rustic bard a fortunate name. Dr. Parr derives his first acquaintance with the late Mr. *Homer*, from the aptness of his name, associating with his pursuits. Our writers of Romances and Novels are initiated into all the arcana of *Names*, which costs them many painful inventions. It is recorded of one of the old Spanish writers of Romance, that he was for many days at a loss to coin a fit name for one of his giants; he wished to hammer out one equal in magnitude to the person he conceived in imagination; and in the haughty and lofty name of *Traquitantos*, he thought he had succeeded. Richardson, the great father of our Novelists, appears to have

considered the *name* of Sir *Charles Grandison*, as *perfect* as his character, for his Heroine writes "You know his *noble name* my Lucy." He felt the same for his *Clementina*, for Miss Byron writes, "Ah Lucy, what a *pretty name* is *Clementina!*" We experience a certan tenderness for *names*, and persons of refined imaginations are fond to give affectionate or lively epithets to things and persons they love. In more ancient times in our own Country the ladies appear to have been equally sensible to poetical or elegant *names*,—such as *Alicia, Celicia, Diana, Helena, &c.* a curious point amply proved by Mr. Chalmers in his apology for the believers in the Shakspeare Papers, p. 178. Spenser, the poet, gave to his two sons, two *names* of this kind; he called one *Silvanus* from the woody Kilcolman, his estate; and the other *Peregrine*, from his having been born in a strange place, and his mother then travelling. The fair Eloisa gave the whimsical name of *Astrolabus* to her boy; it bore some reference to the Stars, as her own to the Sun.

Whether this name of *Astrolabus* had any scientific influence over the son, I know not, but I have no doubt that whimsical names may have a great influence over our characters. The practice of romantic names among persons,

even of the lowest orders of society, has become a very general evil, and doubtless many unfortunate beauties of the names of *Clarissa* and *Eloisa*, might have escaped under the less dangerous appellatives of *Elizabeth* or *Deborah*. I know a person who has not passed his life without some inconvenience from his *name*, mean talents and violent passions not according with *Antoninus*; and a certain writer of verses seldom sober, might have been no versifier and no bumperer, had it not been for his namesake *Horace*. It is in cases like these that Sterne humorously refers and exhorts all god-fathers not "to nicodemus a man into nothing."

It is no trifling misfortune in life to bear an illustrious name; and in an author it is peculiarly severe. A history now by a Mr. Hume, or a poem by a Mr. Pope, would be examined with different eyes than had they borne any other name. The relative of a great author should endeavour not to be an author. Thomas Corneille had the unfortunate honour of being brother to a great poet, and his own merits have been considerably injured by the involuntary comparison. The son of Racine has written with an amenity not unworthy of his celebrated father; amiable and candid, he had his portrait painted, with the works of his father

in his hand, and his eye fixed on this verse from Phædra,

"Et moi, fils inconnu! d'un si glorieux Pere!"

But even his modesty only served to whet the dart of Epigram. It was once bitterly said of the son of an eminent literary character:

"He tries to write because his father writ,
And shews himself a bastard by his wit."

Amongst some of the disagreeable consequences attending some *names*, is, when they are unfortunately adapted to an uncommon rhime; but, indeed, how can any man defend himself from this malicious ingenuity of wit? *Freret*, one of those unfortunate victims, to Boileau's verse, is said not to have been deficient in the decorum of his manners, and he complained that he was represented as a drunkard, merely because his *name rhimed* to *Cabaret*. Murphy no doubt studied hard, and felicitated himself in his literary quarrel with Dr. *Franklin*, the poet and critical reviewer, by adopting the singular rhime of "Envy rankling" to his rival's and critic's name.

Superstition has interfered even in the *choice of names*, and this solemn folly has received the name of a science, called *Onomantia*, of which the superstitious ancients discovered a

hundred foolish mysteries. They cast up the numeral letters of *names*, and Achilles was therefore fated to vanquish Hector, from the numeral letters in his name amounting to a higher number than his rival's. They made many whimsical divisions and subdivisions of names, to prove them lucky or unlucky. But these follies are not those that I am treating on. Some names have been considered as more auspicious than others. Cicero informs us that when the Romans raised troops, they were anxious that the *name* of the first soldier who enlisted, should be one of good augury. When the Censors numbered the Citizens, they always begun by a fortunate name, such as *Salvius, Valerius.* A person of the name of *Regillianus* was chosen Emperor, merely from the royal sound of his name, and *Jovian* was elected because his name approached nearest to the beloved one of the philosophic *Julian.* This fanciful superstition was even carried so far that some were considered as auspicious, and others as unfortunate. The superstitious belief in *auspicious names* was so strong, that Cæsar, in his African expedition, gave a command to an obscure and distant relative of the Scipios, to please the popular prejudice that the Scipios were invincible in Africa. Suetonius observes that all those of the family of Cæsar who bore

the surname of Caius, perished by the sword. The Emperor Severus consoled himself for the licentious life of his Empress Julia, from the fatality attending those of her *name*. This strange prejudice of lucky and unlucky names, prevailed in modern Europe; the successor of Adrian VI. (as Guicciardini tells us) wished to preserve his own name on the papal throne; but he gave up the wish when the conclave of Cardinals used the powerful argument that all the Popes who had preserved their own names, had died in the first year of their pontificate. Cardinal Marcel Cervin, who preserved his name when elected Pope, died on the twentieth day of his pontificate, and this confirmed this superstitious opinion. La Morth le Vayer gravely asserts that all the Queens of Naples of the name of *Joan*, and the Kings of Scotland of the name of *James*, have been unfortunate, and we have formal treatises of the fatality of christian names.

It is a vulgar notion that every female of the name of *Agnes* is fated to become mad. Every nation has some names labouring with this popular prejudice. Herrera, the Spanish historian, records an anecdote in which the choice of a Queen, entirely arose from her *name*. When two French ambassadors negotiated a marriage between one of the Spanish Princesses and

Louis VIII. the names of the royal females were *Urraca* and *Blanche.* The former was the eldest and the most beautiful, and intended by the Spanish Court for the French Monarch; but they resolutely preferred *Blanche*, observing that the *name* of *Urraca* would never do! and for the sake of a more mellifluous sound, they carried off, exulting in their own discerning ears, the happier named, but less beautiful Princess.

There are *names* indeed which are painful to the feelings, from the associations of our passions. I have seen the christian *name* of a Gentleman, the victim to the caprice of his godfather, who is called *Blast us Godly*,—which, were he designed for a Bishop, must irritate religious feelings. I am not surprised that one of the Spanish Monarchs refused to employ a sound Catholic for his Secretary, because his name *(Martin Lutero)* had an affinity to the *name* of the reformer. The fondness which some have felt to perpetuate their *names*, when their race has fallen extinct, is well known; and a fortune has been given for a change of name; but the affection for names has gone even further. A *Similitude of names*, Camden observes, "dothe kindle sparkes of love and liking among meere strangers." I have more than once observed the great pleasure of persons

with uncommon names, meeting with another of the same name; an instant relationship appears to take place, and they do not feel themselves insulated in the crowd of society. It is a fact which I know, than an ingenious ornamental manufacturer who bears a name which he supposes to be very uncommon, having executed an order of a gentleman of the *same name*, refused to send his bill, because he had never yet met one of the same name, and preferred the honour of serving him for the *sake of his name!*

Among the Greeks and the Romans, beautiful and significant names were studied. The sublime Plato himself has noticed the present topic,—his visionary ear was sensible to the delicacy of a name, and his exalted fancy was delighted with *beautiful names*, as well as every other species of beauty. In his Cratyllus he is solicitous that persons should have happy, harmonious, and attractive *names*. According to Aulus Gellius, the Athenians enacted by a public decree, that no Slave should ever bear the consecrated names of their two youthful patriots, Harmodius and Aristogeton; names which had been devoted to the liberties of their country, they considered would be contaminated by servitude. The ancient Romans decreed that the surnames of infamous patricians should not be

borne by any other patrician of that family, that their very names might be degraded and expire with them. Eutropius gives a pleasing proof of national friendships being cemented by a *name*; by a treaty of peace between the Romans and the Sabines, they agreed to melt the two nations into one mass, that they should bear their *names* conjointly; the Roman should add his to the Sabine, and the Sabine take a Roman name.

The ancients *named* both persons and things from some event, or other circumstance, connected with the object they were to name. Chance, fancy, superstition, fondness, and piety have invented *names*. It was a common and whimsical custom among the ancients, (observes Larcher, as quoted by Mr. Beloe,) to give as *nicknames*, the *letters* of the alphabet. Thus a lame girl was called *Lambda*, on account of the resemblance which her lameness made her bear to the letter λ, or *lambda!* Æsop was called *Theta* by his master, from his superior acuteness. Another was called *Beta*, from his love of beet. It was thus Scarron, with infinite good temper, alluded to his zig-zag body, by comparing himself to the letters s or z.

The learned Calmet also notices among the Hebrew *nick-names*, and names of raillery taken from defects of body or mind, &c. One

is called Nabal or *fool;* another Hamor the *Ass;* Hagab the *Grasshopper,* &c. Women had frequently the names of animals; as Deborah the *Bee;* Rachel the *Sheep.* Others from their nature or other qualifications; as Tamar the *Palm-tree;* Hadassa the *Myrtle;* Sarah the *Princess;* Hannah the *gracious.* The Indians of North America employ sublime and picturesque *names;* such are the great Eagle — the Partridge — Dawn of the Day! — Great swift arrow! — Path-opener! — Sun-bright!

THE JEWS OF YORK.

Among the most interesting passages of history, are those in which we contemplate an oppressed, yet sublime spirit, agitated by the conflict of two terrific passions: Implacable hatred attempting a resolute vengeance, while that impotent vengeance, with dignified and silent horror, sinks into the last expression of despair. In a degenerate nation, we may on such rare occasions, discover among them, a spirit superior to its companions and its fortune.

In the ancient and modern history of the Jews, we may find two kindred examples. I refer the reader for the more ancient narrative, to the second book of the Maccabees, chap. xiv.

v. 37. No feeble and unaffecting painting is presented in the simplicity of the original; I proceed to relate the narrative of the Jews of York.

When Richard the Ist. ascended the throne, the Jews, to conciliate the royal protection, brought their tributes. Many had hastened from remote parts of England, and appearing at Westminster, the court and the mob imagined that they had leagued to bewitch his Majesty. An edict was issued to forbid their presence at the coronation; but several whose curiosity was greater than their prudence, conceived that they might pass unobserved among the crowd, and ventured to insinuate themselves into the Abbey. Probably their voice and their visage alike betrayed them, for they were soon discovered; they flew diversely in great consternation, while many were dragged out with little remains of life.

A rumour spread rapidly through the city, that in honour of the festival, the Jews were to be massacred. The populace, at once eager of royalty and riot, pillaged and burnt their houses, and murdered the devoted Jews. Benedict, a Jew of York, to save his life, received baptism; and returning to that city, with his friend Jocenus, the most opulent of the Jews, died of his wounds. Jocenus and his servants

narrated the late tragic circumstances to their neighbours, but where they hoped to move sympathy, they excited rage. The people at York soon gathered to imitate the people at London; and their first assault was on the house of the late Benedict, which having some strength and magnitude, contained his family and friends, who found their graves in its ruins. The alarmed Jews hastened to Jocenus, who conducted them to the governor of York Castle, and prevailed on him to afford them an asylum for their persons and effects. In the mean while their habitations were levelled, and the owners murdured; except a few unresisting beings, who unmanly in sustaining honour, were adapted to receive baptism.

The castle had sufficient strength for their defence; but a suspicion arising that the governor, who often went out, intended to betray them, they one day refused him entrance. He complained to the sheriff of the county, and the chiefs of the violent party, who stood deeply indebted to the Jews, uniting with him, orders were issued to attack the castle. The crude multitude united with the soldiery, felt such a desire of slaughtering those they intended to despoil, that the sheriff repenting of the order, revoked it, but in vain; Fanaticism and robbery once set loose, will satiate their apetency for

blood and plunder. They solicited the aid of the superior citizens, who, perhaps not owing quite so much money to the Jews, humanely refused it; but having addressed the clergy (the barbarous clergy of those days) were by them animated, conducted, and blest.

The leader of this rabble was a canon regular, whose zeal was so fervent, that he stood by them in his surplice, which he considered as a coat of mail, and reiteratedly exclaimed, "Destroy the enemies of Jesus." This spiritual laconism invigorated the arm of men, who perhaps wanted no other stimulative than the hope of obtaining the immense property of the besieged. It is related of this canon, that every morning before he went to assist in battering the walls, he swallowed a consecrated wafer. One day having approached too near, defended as he conceived by his surplice, this church militant was crushed by a heavy fragment of the wall, rolled from the battlement.

But the avidity of certain plunder prevailed over any reflection, which, on another accasion, the loss of so pious a leader might have raised. Their attacks continued; till at length the Jews perceived they could hold out no longer, and a council was called, to consider what remained to be done in the extremity of danger.

Among the Jews, their elder Rabbin was

most respected. It has been customary with this people to invite for this place some foreigner, renowned among them for the depth of his learning, and the sanctity of his manners. At this time the *Haham*, or elder Rabbin, was a foreigner who had been sent over to instruct them in their laws, and was a person, as we shall observe, of no ordinary qualifications. When the Jewish council was assembled, the *Haham* rose, and addressed them in this manner — "Men of Israel! the God of our ancestors is omniscient, and there is no one who can say why doest thou this? This day he commands us to die for his law; for that law which we have cherished from the first hour it was given, which we have preserved pure throughout our captivity in all nations, and which for the many consolations it has given us, and the eternal hope it communicates, can we do less than die? Posterity shall behold this book of truth, sealed with our blood; and our death, while it displays our sincerity, shall impart confidence to the wanderer of Israel. Death is before our eyes; and we have only to choose an honourable and easy one. If we fall into the hands of our enemies, which you know we cannot escape, our death will be ignominious and cruel; for these Christians, who picture the spirit of God in a dove, and confide in the meek Jesus, are athirst for

our blood, and prowl around the castle like wolves. It is, therefore, my advice that we elude their tortures; that we ourselves should be our own executioners; and that we voluntarily surrender our lives to our Creator. We trace the invisible Jehovah in his acts; God seems to call for us, but let us not be unworthy of that call. Suicide, on occasions like the present, is both rational and lawful, many examples are not wanting among our forefathers; as I advise men of Israel! they have acted on similar occasions." Having said this, the old man sat down and wept.

The assembly was divided in their opinions. Men of fortitude applauded its wisdom, but the pusillanimous murmured that it was a dreadful council.

Again the Rabbin rose, and spoke these few words in a firm and decisive tone. "My children! since we are not unanimous in our opinions, let those who do not approve of my advice, depart from this assembly!"—Some departed, but the greater number attached themselves to their venerable priest. They now employed themselves in consuming their valuables by fire; and every man fearful of trusting to the timid and irresolute hand of the women, first destroyed his wife and children, and then himself. Jocenus and the Rabbin alone remained.

Their life was protracted to the last, that they might see every thing performed, according to their orders. Jocenus, being the chief Jew, was distinguished by the last mark of human respect, in receiving his death from the consecrated hand of the aged Rabbin, who immediately after, performed the melancholy duty on himself.

All this was transacted in the depth of the night. In the morning the walls of the castle were found wrapt in flames, and only a few miserable and pusillanimous beings, unworthy of the sword, were seen on the battlements, pointing to their extinct brethren. When they opened the gates of the castle, these men verified the sage prediction of their late Rabbin; for the multitude, bursting through the solitary courts, found themselves defrauded of their hopes, and in a moment avenged themselves on the feeble wretches, who knew not to die with honour.

Such is the narrative of the Jews of York, of whom the historian can only cursorily observe, that five hundred destroyed themselves; but it is the philosopher who inquires into the causes, and the manner of these glorious suicides. These are histories which meet the eye of few, yet of infinitely more advantage than those which are read by every one. We in-

struct ourselves in meditating on these scenes of heroic exertion; and if by such histories we make but a slow progress in chronology, our heart is however expanded with sentiment.

I admire not the stoicism of Cato, more than the fortitude of the Rabbin; or rather we should applaud that of the Rabbin much more; for Cato was familiar with the animating visions of Plato, and was the associate of Cicero and of Cæsar. The Rabbin had probably read only the Pentateuch, and mingled with companions of mean occupations, and meaner minds. Cato was accustomed to the grandeur of the mistress of the universe; and the Rabbin to the littleness of a provincial town. Men, like pictures, may be placed in an obscure and unfavourable light; but the finest picture, in the unilluminated corner, still retains the design and colouring of the master. My Rabbin is a companion for Cato. His history is a tale,

"Which Cato's self had not disdained to hear."

POPE.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS.

The sovereignty of the seas, which foreigners dispute with us, is as much a conquest as any one obtained on land; it is gained and pre-

served by our cannons, and the French, who, for ages past, exclaim against what they call our tyranny, are only hindered from becoming themselves universal tyrants over land and sea, by that sovereignty of the seas without which Great Britain would cease to exist.

In a late memoir of the French Institute, I read a bitter philippic against this sovereignty, and a notice adapted to the writer's purpose of two great works: the one by Selden, and the other by Grotius, on this subject. The following is the historical anecdote useful to revive.

In 1634 a dispute arose between the English and Dutch concerning the herring-fishery upon the British coast. The French and Dutch had always persevered in declaring that the seas were perfectly free; and grounded their reasons on a work of Hugo Grotius.

So early as in 1609 the great Grotius had published his treatise of *Mare Liberum*, in favour of the freedom of the seas. And it is a curious fact, that in 1618, Selden had composed another treatise in defence of the King's dominion over the seas; but which, from accidents which are known, was not published till this dispute revived the controversy. Selden in 1636 gave the world his *Mare Clausum*, in answer to the treatise of Grotius.

Both these great men felt a mutual respect

for each other. They only knew the rivality of genius.

As a matter of curious discussion, and legal investigation, the philosopher must incline to the arguments of Selden, who has proved by records the first occupancy of the English; and the English dominion over the four seas, to the utter exclusion of the French and Dutch from fishing, without our licence. He proves that our Kings have always levied great sums, without even the concurrence of their parliaments, for the express purpose of defending this sovereignty at sea. A copy of Selden's work was placed in the council-chest of the Exchequer and in the court of Admiralty, as one of our most precious records.

The historical anecdote is finally closed, by the Dutch themselves, who now agreed to acknowledge the English sovereignty in the seas, and pay a tribute of thirty thousand pounds to the King of England for liberty to fish in the seas, and consented to annual tributes.

That the Dutch yielded to Selden's arguments is a triumph, we cannot venture to boast. The *ultima ratio regum* prevailed; and when we had destroyed their whole fishing fleet, the affair appeared much clearer than in the ingenious volumes of Grotius or Selden. Another Dutchman presented the States-General

with a ponderous reply to Selden's *Mare Clausum*, but the wise Sommelsdyke advised the States to suppress the idle discussion; observing that this affair must be decided by the *sword*, and not by the *pen*.

It may be curious to add, that as no prevailing or fashionable subject can be agitated, but some idler must interfere to make it extravagant and very new, so this grave subject did not want for something of this nature. A learned Italian, I believe, agreed with our author Selden in general, that the *Sea*, as well as the *Earth*, is subject to some states; but he maintained, that the dominion of the sea belonged to the *Genoese!*

ON THE CUSTOM OF KISSING HANDS.

Mr. Morin, a French academician, has amused himself with collecting several historical notices of this custom. I give a summary, for the benefit of those who have had the honour of kissing his majesty's hand. It is not those who kiss the royal hand who could write best on the custom.

This custom is not only very ancient, and nearly universal, but has been alike participated by religion and society.

To begin with religion. From the remotest

times men saluted the sun, moon, and stars, by kissing the hand. Job assures us that he was never given to this superstition, xxxi. 26. The same honour was rendered to Baal, Kings, i. 18. Other instances might be adduced.

We now pass to Greece. There all foreign superstitions were received. Lucian, after having mentioned various sorts of sacrifices which the rich offered the gods, adds, that the poor adored them by the simpler compliment of kissing their hands. That author gives an anecdote of Demosthenes, which shews this custom. When a prisoner to the soldiers of Antipater, he asked to enter a temple.—When he entered, he touched his mouth with his hands, which the guards took for an act of religion. He did it however more securely to swallow the poison he had prepared for such an occasion. He mentions other instances.

From the Greeks it passed to the Romans. Pliny places it amongst those ancient customs of which they were ignorant of the origin or the reason. Persons were treated as atheists, who would not kiss their hands when they entered a temple.—When Apuleius mentions Psyche, he says, she was so beautiful that they adored her as Venus, in kissing the right hand.

This ceremonial action rendered respectable the earliest institutions of Christianity. It was

a custom with the primæval bishops to give their hands to be kissed, by the ministers, who served at the altar.

This custom, however, as a religious rite, declined with Paganism.

In society, our ingenious academician considers the custom of kissing hands as essential to its welfare. It is a mute form which expresses reconciliation, which intreats favours, or which thanks for those received. It is an universal language, intelligible without an interpreter; which doubtless preceded writing, and perhaps speech itself.

Solomon says of the flatterers and suppliants of his time, that they ceased not to kiss the hands of their patrons, till they had obtained the favours which they solicited. In Homer we see Priam kissing the hands and embracing the knees of Achilles, while he supplicates for the body of Hector.

This custom prevailed in ancient Rome, but it varied. In the first ages of the republic, it seems to have been only practised by inferiors to their superiors:—equals gave their hands and embraced. In the progress of time even the soldiers refused to shew this mark of respect to their generals; and their kissing the hand of Cato when he was obliged to quit them, was regarded as an extra-

ordinary circumstance, at a period of such refinement. The great respect paid to the tribunes, consuls, and dictators, obliged individuals to live with them in a more distant and respectful manner; and instead of embracing them as they did formerly, they considered themselves as fortunate if allowed to kiss their hands. Under the emperors kissing hands became an essential duty, even for the great themselves; inferior courtiers were obliged to be content to adore the purple, by kneeling, touching the robe of the emperor by the right hand, and carrying it to the mouth. Even this was thought too free; and at length they saluted the emperor at a distance, by kissing their hands, in the same manner as when they adored their Gods.

It is superfluous to trace this custom in every country where it exists. It is practised in every known country, in respect to sovereigns, and superiors, even amongst the negroes, and the inhabitants of the New World. Cortez found it established at Mexico, where more than a thousand lords saluted him, in touching the earth with their hands, which they afterwards carried to their mouths.

Thus whether the custom of salutation is practised by kissing the hands of others from respect, or in bringing one's own to the mouth,

it is of all other customs the most universal. Mr. Morin concludes, that this practice is now become too gross a familiarity, and it is considered as a meanness to kiss the hand of those with whom we are in habits of intercourse; and he prettily observes that this custom would be entirely lost, if *lovers* were not solicitous to preserve it in all its full power.

POPES.

VALOIS observes that the Popes scrupulously followed, in the early ages of the church, the custom of placing their names after that of the person whom they addressed in their letters. This mark of their humility he proves by letters written by various Popes. Thus when the great projects of politics were yet unknown to them, did they adhere to Christian meekness. There came at length the day when one of the Popes, whose name does not occur to me, said that "it was safer to quarrel with a Prince than with a Friar." Henry VI, being at the feet of Pope Celestine, his holiness thought proper to kick the crown off his head; which ludicrous and disgraceful action, Baronius has highly praised. Jortin observes on this great Cardinal, and advocate of the Roman See, that he

breathes nothing but fire and brimstone; and accounts Kings and Emperors to be mere catchpoles and constables, bound to execute with implicit faith all the commands of insolent Ecclesiastics. Bellarmin was made a cardinal for his efforts and devotion to the Papal cause, and maintaining this monstrous paradox, — that if the Pope forbid the exercise of virtue, and command that of vice, the Roman church, under pain of a sin, was obliged to abandon virtue for vice, if it would not sin against *conscience!*

It was Nicholas I, a bold and enterprising Pope, who, in 858, forgetting the pious modesty of his predecessors, took advantage of the divisions in the royal families of France, and did not hesitate to place his name before that of the Kings and Emperors of the house of France, to whom he wrote. Since that time he has been imitated by all his successors, and this encroachment on the honours of monarchy has passed into a custom from having been suffered in its commencement.

Concerning the acknowledged *infallibility of the Popes*, it appears that Gregory VII. in council, decreed that the church of Rome neither *had erred*, and *never should err*. It was thus this prerogative of his holiness became received, till 1313, when John XXII. abrogated decrees made by three Popes his predecessors, and de-

clared that what was done *amiss* by one Pope or Council might be *corrected* by another; and Gregory XI. 1370, in his will deprecates, *si quid in catholica fide errasset.* The University of Vienna protested against it, calling it a contempt of God, and an idolatry, if any one in matters of faith should appeal from a *council* to the *Pope*; that is, from *God* who presides in *councils*, to *Man.* But the *infallibility* was at length established by Leo X. especially after Luther's opposition, because they despaired of defending their indulgences, bulls, &c. by any other method.

Imagination cannot form a scene more dreadful than when these men were in full power, and to serve their political purposes hurled the thunders of their *excommunications* over a kingdom. It was a national distress not inferior to a plague or famine, and an excellent lesson for those who seem not to know how far the human mind can be debased with despotic superstition. De Saint Foix, in his Historical Essays, has sketched an animated description of a kingdom under a Papal excommunication.

Philip Augustus being desirous of divorcing Ingelburg, to unite himself to Agnes de Meranie, the Pope put his kingdom under an interdict. The churches were shut during the space of eight months; they said neither mass nor vespers; they did not marry; and even the offspring of

the married, born at this unhappy period, *were considered* as *illicit*: and because the King would not sleep with his wife, it was not permitted to any of his subjects to sleep with their's! In that year France was threatened with an extinction of the ordinary generation. A man under this curse of public penance was divested of all his functions, civil, military, and matrimonial; he was not allowed to dress his hair, to shave, to bathe, nor even change his linen, so that (says Mr. De Saint Foix) upon the whole this made a filthy penitent. The good King Robert (he continues) incurred the censures of the church for having married his cousin. He was immediately abandoned. Two faithful domestics alone remained with him, and these always passed through the fire whatever he touched. In a word, the horror which an excommunication occasioned was such, that a woman of pleasure, with whom one Peletier had passed some moments, having learnt soon afterwards that he had been above six months an excommunicated person, fell into a panic, and with great difficulty recovered from her convulsions.

LITERARY COMPOSITION.

To literary composition we may apply the saying of an ancient philosopher;—"a little

thing gives perfection, although perfection is not a little thing."

The great legislator of the Hebrews orders to pull off the fruit for the first three years, and not to taste them. Levit. xix. ver. 23. He was not ignorant how it weakens a young tree to bring to maturity its first fruits. Thus, on literary compositions, our green essays ought to be picked away. Indeed, the word *Zamar*, by a beautiful metaphor from *pruning trees*, means in Hebrew, to *compose verses*. Blotting and correcting was so much Churchill's abhorrence, that he once compared it by energetically saying, that *it was like cutting away one's own flesh.* This strong figure sufficiently shews his repugnance to a necessary duty. He is now neglected, for posterity only will respect those who

> "——— File off the mortal part
> Of glowing thought with attic art."
>
> YOUNG.

I have heard that this careless bard, after a successful work, usually precipitated the publication of another, relying on its crudeness being passed over on the public curiosity excited by its better brother. He called this getting double pay; for thus he secured the sale of a hurried work. But Churchill was a spend-thrift of fame, and enjoyed all his revenue while he lived; posterity owes him little.

Bayle, an experienced observer in literary matters, tells us, that *correction* is by no means practicable by some authors; this he instances in the case of Ovid. In exile, his compositions were nothing more than spiritless repetitions of what he had formerly written. He confesses both negligence and idleness in the corrections of his works. The vivacity which animated his first productions, failing him when he revised his poems, he found correction too laborious, and he abandoned it. This, however, is only an excuse. "It is certain," observes our acute critic, "that *some authors cannot correct.* They compose with pleasure, and with ardour; but they exhaust all their force: they fly but with one wing when they review their works; the first fire does not return; there is in their imagination a certain calm which hinders their pen from making any progress. Their mind is like a boat, which only advances by the strength of oars."

Dr. More, the Platonist, had such an exuberance of fancy, that *correction* was a much greater labour than *composition.* He used to say, that in writing his works, he was forced to cut his way through a crowd of thoughts as through a wood; and that he threw off in his compositions as much as would make an ordinary philosopher. More was a great enthusiast, and, of course, an egotist, so that *criticism* ruffled

his temper, notwithstanding all his Platonism. When accused of obscurities and extravagancies, he said, that like the ostrich, he laid his eggs in the sands, which would prove vital and prolific in time; however, these ostrich eggs have proved to be addled. His folio is now rarely opened.

A habit of correctness in the lesser parts of composition will assist the higher. And I think it worth recording that the great Milton was anxious for correct punctuation, and that Addison was solicitous after the minutiæ of the press. Savage, Armstrong, and others, felt tortures on similar objects. It is said of Julius Scaliger, that he had this peculiarity in his manner of composition; he wrote with such accuracy that his MSS. and the printed copy corresponded page for page, and line for line.

Malherbe, the father of French poetry, tormented himself by a prodigious slowness; and was employed rather in perfecting, than in forming works. His muse is compared to a fine woman in the pangs of delivery. He exulted in this tardiness, and, after finishing a poem of one hundred verses, or a discourse of ten pages, he used to say he ought to repose for ten years. Balzac, the first writer in French prose who gave majesty and harmony to a period, it is said, did not grudge to bestow a week on a page, and

was never satisfied with his first thoughts. Our "costive" Gray entertained the same notion: and it is hard to say if it arose from the sterility of their genius, or their sensibility of taste.

It is curious to observe, that the MSS. of Tasso, which are still preserved, are illegible from the vast number of their corrections. I have given a fac-simile, as correct as it is possible to conceive, of one page of Pope's MS. Homer, as a specimen of his continual corrections and critical rasures. The celebrated Madame Dacier never could satisfy herself in translating Homer: continually retouching the version, even in its happiest passages. There were several parts which she translated in six or seven manners; and she frequently noted in the margin—*I have not yet done it.*

When Paschal became warm in his celebrated controversy, he applied himself with incredible labour to the composition of his "Provincial Letters." He was frequently twenty days occupied on a single letter. He recommenced some above seven and eight times, that he might bring them to that perfection which they have reached. Voltaire says, "it is one of the best books ever published in France."

The Quintus Curtius of Vaugelas, occupied him 30 years; generally every period was trans-

lated in the margin five or six several ways; Chapelain and Conrart, who took the pains to review this work critically, were many times perplexed in their choice of passages, they generally liked best that which had been first composed. Hume was never done with corrections; every edition varies with the preceding ones. But there are more fortunate and fluent minds than these. Voltaire tells us of Fenelon's Telemachus that the amiable author composed it in his retirement in the short period of three months. Fenelon had before this, formed his style, and his mind overflowed with all the spirit of the ancients. He opened a copious fountain, and there were not ten erasures in the original MS. The same facility accompanied Gibbon after the experience of his first volume; and the same copious readiness attended Adam Smith, who dictated to his amanuensis, while he walked about his study.

The ancients were as pertinacious in their corrections. Demosthenes was employed ten years on his famous apology *pro Corona*, and to appear natural he studied with the most refined art. After a labour of eleven years, Virgil pronounced his Æneid imperfect. Dio Cassius devoted twelve years to the composition of his history, and Diodorus Siculus, thirty.

However, there is a middle between velocity and torpidity; the Italians say, it is not necessary to be a stag, but we ought not to be a tortoise.

Many ingenious expedients are not to be contemned in literary labours. The critical advice

"To chuse an *author*, as we would a *friend*,"

is very useful to young writers. The finest geniuses have always affectionately attached themselves to some particular author of congenial disposition. Pope, in his version of Homer, kept a constant eye on his master Dryden; Corneille's favourite authors were the brilliant Tacitus, the heroic Livy, and the lofty Lucan; the influence of their characters may be traced in his best tragedies. The great Clarendon, when employed in writing his history, read over very carefully Tacitus and Livy, to give dignity to his style, as he writes in a letter. Tacitus did not surpass him in his portraits, though Clarendon never equalled Livy in his narrative.

The mode of literary composition adopted by that admirable student Sir William Jones, is well deserving our attention. After having fixed on his subjects, he always added the *model* of the composition; and thus boldly wrestled with the great authors of antiquity. On board the frigate which was carrying him to India, he pro-

jected the following works, and noted them in this manner:

1. Elements of the Laws of England.
Model—The Essay on Bailments. ARISTOTLE.
2. The History of the American War.
Model—THUCYDIDES and POLYBIUS.
3. Britain Discovered, an Epic Poem. Machinery—Hindu Gods. *Model*—HOMER.
4. Speeches, Political and Forensic.
Model—DEMOSTHENES.
5. Dialogues, Philosophical and Historical.
Model—PLATO.

And of favourite authors there are also favourite works, which we love to be familiarized with. Bartholinus has a dissertation on reading books, in which he points out the superior performances of different writers. Of St. Augustine, his city of God; of Hippocrates, *Coacæ Prænotiones*; of Cicero, *de Officiis*; of Aristotle, *De Animalibus*; of Catullus, *Coma Berenices*; of Virgil, the sixth book of the Æneid, &c. Such judgments are indeed not to be our guides; but such a mode of reading is useful to contract our studies within due limits.

Evelyn, who has written treatises on several subjects, was occupied for years on them. His manner of arranging his materials and his mode of composition, appear excellent. Having chosen a subject, he analized it into its various

parts, under certain heads, or titles, to be filled up at leisure. Under these heads he set down his own thoughts as they occurred, occasionally inserting whatever was useful from his reading. When his collections were thus formed, he digested his own thoughts regularly, and strengthened them by authorities from ancient and modern authors, or alledged his reasons for dissenting from them. His collections in time became voluminous, but he then exercised that judgment which the formers of such collections usually are deficient in. With Hesiod he knew that "Half is better than the whole," and it was his aim to express the quintessence of his reading; but not to give it in a crude state to the world; and when his *treatises* were sent to the press they were not half the size of his collections.

Thus also Winkelman in his "History of Art," an extensive work, was long lost in settling on a plan; like artists, who make random sketches of their first conceptions, he threw on paper ideas, hints, and observations which occurred in his readings—many of them, indeed, were not connected with his history, but were afterwards inserted in some of his other works.

Even Gibbon tells us of his Roman History, "at the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true æra of the

decline and fall of the empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narration; and I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years." Akenside has exquisitely described the progress and the pains of genius in its delightful reveries, Pleasures of Imagination, B. iii. v. 373. The pleasures of composition in an ardent genius were never so finely described as by Buffon. Speaking of the hours of composition he said, "These are the most luxurious and delightful moments of life: Moments which have often enticed me to pass fourteen hours at my desk in a state of transport; this *gratification* more than *glory*, is my reward!"

The publication of Gibbon's Memoirs conveyed to the world a faithful picture of the most fervid industry; it is in *youth*, the foundations of such a sublime edifice as his history, must be laid. How such a work was raised the world can there trace the Colossus of erudition, day by day, and year by year.

The experienced Gibbon has furnished a new idea in the art of reading! We ought, says he, not to attend to the *order of our books, so much as of our thoughts*. "The perusal of a particular work gives birth perhaps to ideas unconnected with the subject it treats; I pursue these ideas, and quit my proposed plan of reading."

Thus in the midst of Homer he read Longinus; a chapter of Longinus led to an epistle of Pliny; and having finished Longinus, he followed the train of his ideas of the sublime and beautiful in the inquiry of Burke, and concluded with comparing the ancient, with the modern Longinus.

This is a valuable hint to students; it has indeed been practised by others. Ancillon was a very ingenious student; he seldom read a book throughout without reading in his progress through it many others; his library-table was always covered with a number of books for the most part open; this variety of authors bred no confusion; they all assisted to throw light on the same topic; he was not disgusted by frequently seeing the same thing in different writers; their opinions were so many new strokes, which completed the ideas which he had conceived. The celebrated Father Paul studied in this manner. He never passed over an interesting subject till he had confronted a variety of authors. In historical researches he never would advance, till he had fixed, once for all, the places, times, and opinions—a mode of study which appears very dilatory, but in the end, will make a great saving of time, and labour of mind; those who have not pursued this method, are all their lives at a loss to settle their

opinions and their belief, from the want of having once brought them to such a test.

I shall now offer a plan of Historical Study, and a calculation of the necessary time it will occupy without specifying the authors; as I only propose to animate a young student, who feels he has not to number the days of a patriarch, that he should not be alarmed at the vast labyrinth, historical researches present to his eye. If we look into public libraries, more than thirty thousand volumes of history may be found; but it is as unnecessary, as it is impossible, to penetrate through these masses of confusion.

Lenglet du Fresnoy, one of the most learned men in France, in its most learned age, calculated that he could not read, with satisfaction (and he was a most indefatigable student), more than ten hours a-day, and ten pages in folio an hour; which makes 100 pages every day. Supposing each volume to contain 500 pages, every month would amount to one volume and a half, which makes 18 volumes in folio in the year. In fifty years, a student could only read 900 volumes in folio. All this too, supposing an uninterrupted health, and an intelligence as rapid as the eyes of the laborious researcher. A man can hardly study to advantage till past twenty, and at fifty his

eyes will be dimmed, and his head stuffed with much reading that should, never be read. His fifty years for the 900 volumes, are are reduced to thirty years, and 500 volumes! And, after all, the universal historian must resolutely face thirty thousand volumes!

But to cheer the historiographer, he shows, that a public library is only necessary to be consulted; it is in our private closet where should be found those few writers, who direct us to their rivals, without jealousy, and mark, in the vast career of time, those who are worthy to instruct posterity. His calculation proceeds on this plan,—that *six hours* a-day, and the term of *ten years*, are sufficient to pass over, with utility, the immense field of history.

He thus calculates this alarming extent of historical ground.

For a knowledge of Sacred History he gives	3	months.
Ancient Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria, modern Assyria or Persia	1	do.
Greek History	6	do.
Roman History by the moderns	7	do.
Roman History by the original writers	6	do.
Ecclesiastical History, general and particular	30	do.
Modern History	24	do.
To this may be added for recurrences and re-perusals	48	do.

The total will amount to 10 years and a half.

Thus, in *ten years and a half*, a student in

history has obtained an universal knowledge, and this on a plan which permits as much leisure as every student would choose to indulge.

As a specimen of Du Fresnoy's calculations take that of Sacred History.

For reading Pere Calmet's learned dissertations in the order he points out	12 days.
For Pere Calmet's History, in 2 vols. 4to. (now in 4)	12
For Prideaux's History	10
For Josephus	12
For Basnage's History of the Jews	20
In all	66 days.

He allows, however, 90 days, for obtaining a sufficient knowledge of Sacred History.

In reading this sketch, we cease to be surprised at the erudition of a Gibbon; but having admired that erudition, we perceive the necessity of this plan, if we aspire to follow, although at a humble distance, the footsteps of that great man.

A plan, like the present, is susceptible of ridicule from a superficial mind,—from a great mind, although such an one should feel itself incapable of the exertion, this scheme will not be regarded without that reverence we feel for genius animating such industry. This plan, though it may never be rigidly pursued, if once adopted by the youthful historical student, will unerringly conduct him to some great end; and ten years labour of happy industry may render

him capable of consigning to posterity, a history as universal in its topics, as that of the historian who led to this investigation.

POETICAL IMITATIONS, AND SIMILARITIES.

"Tantus amor florum, et generandi gloria mellis."
GEORG. Lib. IV. v. 204.

"Such rage of honey in our bosom beats,
And such a zeal we have for flowery sweets!"
DRYDEN.

THIS article was commenced by me in the early volumes of the Monthly Magazine, and continued by various correspondents, with various success. I here collect only those of my own contribution, because I do not feel authorised to make use of those of other persons, however some may be desirable. One of the most elegant of literary recreations is that of tracing poetical or prose imitations and similarities; for assuredly, similarity is not always imitation. Bishop Hurd's pleasing Essay on "The Marks of Imitation," will assist the critic in deciding on what may only be an accidental similarity, rather than a studied imitation. Those critics have indulged an intemperate abuse in these entertaining researches, who from *a single word* derive the imitation of an *entire*

passage. Wakefield, in his edition of Gray is very liable to this censure.

This kind of literary amusement is not despicable; there are few men of letters who have not been in the habit of marking parallel passages, or tracing imitation, in the thousand shapes it assumes; it forms, it cultivates, it delights taste to observe by what dexterity and variation genius conceals, or modifies, an original thought or image, and to view the same sentiment, or expression, borrowed with art, or heightened by embellishment. The ingenious writer of "A Criticism on Gray's Elegy, in continuation of Dr. Johnson's," has given some observations on this subject, which will please. "It is often entertaining to trace imitation. To detect the adopted image; the copied design; the transferred sentiment; the appropriated phrase; and even the acquired manner and frame, under all the disguises that imitation, combination, and accommodation may have thrown around them, must require both parts and diligence; but it will bring with it no ordinary gratification. A Book professedly on the 'History and Progress of Imitation in Poetry,' written by a man of perspicuity, and an adept in the art of discerning likenesses, even when minute, with examples properly selected, and gradations duly marked, would make an impartial accession to the store

of human literature, and furnish rational curiosity with a high regale." Let me premise that these notices (the wrecks of a large collection of passages I had once formed merely as exercises to form my taste) are not given with the petty malignant delight of detecting the unacknowledged imitations of our best writers, but merely to habituate the young student to an instructive amusement, and to exhibit that beautiful variety which the same image is capable of exhibiting when retouched with all the art of genius.

Gray in his "Ode to Spring" has

"The attic warbler POURS HER THROAT."

Wakefield in his "Commentary" has a copious passage on this poetical diction. He conceives it to be "an admirable improvement of the Greek and Roman classics:

——— χεεν αοιδην: Hes. Scut. Her. 396.

——— "Suaves ex ore *loquelas*
Funde."

LUCRET. I. 40.

This learned editor was little conversant with modern literature, notwithstanding his memorable editions of Gray and Pope. The expression is evidently borrowed not from Hesiod, nor from Lucretius, but from a brother at home.

"Is it for thee, the Linnet POURS HER THROAT?
Essay on Man, Ep. III. v. 33.

Gray in the "Ode to Adversity" addresses the power thus,

"Thou Tamer of the human breast,
Whose IRON SCOURGE and TORTURING HOUR
The bad affright, afflict the best."

Wakefield censures the expression "*torturing hour*," by discovering an impropriety and incongruity. He says, "consistency of figure rather required some *material* image, like *iron scourge* and *adamantine chain*." It is curious to observe a verbal critic lecture such a poet as Gray! The poet probably would never have replied, or, in a moment of excessive urbanity, he might have condescended to point out to this minutest of critics, the following passage in Milton,

——————"When the SCOURGE
Inexorably, and the TORTURING HOUR
Calls us to penance."
Par. Lost, B. II. v. 90.

Gray in his "Ode to Adve: .ty" has,

"Light THEY DISPERSE, and with them go
The SUMMER FRIEND."

Fond of this image he has it again in his "Bard,"

"The SWARM, that in thy NOONTIDE BEAM are born
Gone!"

Perhaps the germ of this beautiful image may be found in Shakspeare,

——— "for men, like BUTTERFLIES
Shew not their mealy wings but to THE SUMMER."
Troilus and Cressida, A. III. S. 7.

and two similar passages in Timon of Athens.

"The swallow follows not summer more willingly than we your lordship.

Timon. Nor more willingly leaves winter; such *summer birds* are men!" Act III.

Again in the same,

——— "one cloud of winter showers
These flies are couch'd." Act II.

Gray in his "Progress of Poetry" has,

"In climes beyond the SOLAR ROAD."

Wakefield has traced this imitation to Dryden; Gray himself refers to Virgil and Petrarch. Wakefield gives the line from Dryden, thus,

"Beyond the year, and out of heaven's high-way."

which he calls extremely bold and poetical. I confess a critic might be allowed to be somewhat fastidious on this unpoetical diction on the *high-way*, which I believe Dryden never used. I think his line was thus,

"Beyond the year out of the SOLAR WALK."

Pope has expressed the image more elegantly, though copied from Dryden,

"Far as the SOLAR WALK, or milky way."

Gray has in his "Bard"

> "Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
> Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart."

Gray himself points out the imitation in Shakspeare, of the latter image; but it is curious to observe that Otway, in his "Venice Preserved," makes Priuli most pathetically exclaim to his daughter, that she is

> "Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,
> Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee."

Gray tells us that the image of his "Bard"

> "Loose his beard and hoary hair,
> Streamed like a METEOR to the troubled air,"

was taken from a picture of the supreme being by Raphael. It is, however, remarkable, and somewhat ludicrous, that the *beard* of Hudibras is also compared to a *meteor*; and the accompanying observation in Butler almost induces one to think that Gray derived from it the whole plan of that sublime Ode — since his *Bard* precisely performs what the *beard* of Hudibras *denounced*. These are the verses:

> "This HAIRY METEOR did denounce
> *The fall of sceptres and of crowns.*"
>
> Hud. C. I.

I have been asked if I am serious in my conjecture that "the *meteor beard*" of Hudibras

might have given birth to "the *Bard*" of Gray. I reply that the *burlesque* and the *sublime* are extremes, and extremes meet. How often does it merely depend on our own state of mind, and on our own taste, to consider the sublime as burlesque. A very vulgar, but acute genius, Thomas Paine, whom we may suppose destitute of all delicacy and refinement, has conveyed to us a notion of the *sublime*, as it is probably experienced by ordinary and uncultivated minds, and even by acute and judicious ones, who are destitute of imagination. He tells us that "the *sublime* and the *ridiculous* are often so nearly related, that it is difficult to class them separately. One step above the sublime makes the ridiculous, and one step above the ridiculous makes the sublime again." May I venture to illustrate this opinion? Would it not appear the ridiculous or burlesque, to describe the sublime revolution of the *Earth* on her axle, round the *Sun*, by comparing it with the action of a *top* flogged by a boy? And yet some of the most exquisite lines in Milton, do this! the poet only alluding in his mind, to the *top*. The earth he describes, whether

> ——— "She from west her *silent course* advance
> With *inoffensive pace* that *spinning sleeps*
> On her *soft axle*, while she *paces even*"—

Be this as it may! it has never I believe been remarked (to return to Gray) that when he conceived the idea of the beard of his *Bard*, he had in his mind the *language* of Milton, who describes Azazel, sublimely unfurling

> The "imperial ensign, which full high advanced,
> *Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind.*"
> Par. Lost. B. I. V. 535.

very similar to Gray's

> "*Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air!*"

Gray has been severely censured by Johnson, for the expression,

> "Give *ample room and verge enough*
> The characters of hell to trace." The BARD.

On the authority of the most unpoetical of critics we must still hear that the poet *has no line so bad*——"*ample room*" is feeble, but would have passed unobserved in any other poem but in the poetry of Gray, who has taught us to admit nothing but what is exquisite. "*Verge enough*" is poetical, since it conveys a material image to the imagination. No one appears to have detected the source from whence, probably, the *whole line* was derived. I am inclined to think it was from the following passage in Dryden:

"Let fortune empty her whole quiver on me
I have a soul that, like an AMPLE SHIELD,
Can take in all, and VERGE ENOUGH for more!"
DRYDEN'S *Don Sebastian.*

Gray in his Elegy has,

"Even in our ashes live their wonted fires."

This line is so obscure that it is difficult to apply it to what precedes it. Mason in his edition in vain attempts to derive it from a thought of Petrarch, and still more vainly attempts to amend it; Wakefield expends an octavo page, to paraphrase this single verse! From the following lines of Chaucer, one would imagine Gray caught the recollected idea. The old Reve in his prologue says, of himself, and of old men,

"For whan we may not don, than wol we speken;
Yet in our ASHEN cold is FIRE yreken.
TYRWHITT'S CHAUCER, Vol. I. p. 153. v. 3879.

Gray has a very expressive *word*, highly poetical, but I think not common,

"For who to DUMB FORGETFULNESS a prey—

and Daniel has, as quoted in Cooper's Muses Library preface,

"And *in himself with sorrow* does complain
The misery of DARK FORGETFULNESS."

A line of Pope's in his Dunciad, "High-born

Howard," echoed in the ear of Gray, when he gave with all the artifice of alliteration,

"High-born Hoel's Harp."

Johnson bitterly censures Gray for giving to adjectives the termination of participles, such as the *cultured* plain; the *daisied* bank; but he solemnly adds, I was sorry to see in the line of a scholar like Gray, "the *honied* spring." I confess I was not sorry; had Johnson received but the faintest tincture of the rich Italian school of English poetry, he would never have formed so tasteless a criticism. *Honied* is employed by Milton in more places than one, but one is sufficient for my purpose,

"Hide me from day's garish eye
While the bee with HONIED thigh;"
Penseroso, v. 142.

The celebrated stanza in Gray's Elegy seems partly to be borrowed.

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a *flower* is born to blush *unseen*,
And *waste its sweetness in the desert air*."

Pope had said;

"There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye
Like *roses* that in *deserts bloom* and *die*."
Rape of the Lock.

Young says of nature;

" In distant wilds by human eye *unseen*
She rears her *flowers* and spreads her velvet green;
Pure gurgling rills the lonely *desert* trace,
And *waste their music* on the savage race,"

And Shenstone has—

" And like the *deserts' lily* bloom to fade!"

Elegy IV.

Gray was so fond of this pleasing imagery that he repeats it in his Ode on the Installation; and Mason echoes it, in his Ode to Memory?

Milton thus paints the evening sun;

" If chance the EVENING SUN with FAREWELL SWEET
Extends his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew," &c.

Par. Lost, B. II. V. 492.

Can there be a doubt that he borrowed this beautiful *farewell* from an obscure poet, quoted by Poole in his " English Parnassus," 1657? The date of Milton's great work, I find since, admits the conjecture; the first edition being that of 1669. The homely lines in Poole are these,

" To Thetis' watry bowers the sun doth hie,
BIDDING FAREWELL unto the gloomy sky,

Young, in his " Love of Fame," very adroitly improves on a witty conceit of Butler. It is curious to observe, that while Butler had made

a remote allusion of a *window* to a *pillory*, a conceit is grafted on this conceit, with even more exquisite wit.

" Each WINDOW, like the PILLORY appears,
With HEADS thrust through; NAILED BY THE EARS!"
Hudibras, part II. c. 3. v. 391.

" An opera, like a PILLORY may be said
To NAIL OUR EARS down, and EXPOSE OUR HEAD."
YOUNG'S Satires.

In the DUENNA we find this thought differently illustrated; by no means imitative, though the satire is congenial. Don Jerome alluding to the *serenaders* says, " These amorous orgies that steal the senses in the *hearing*; as they say Egyptian embalmers serve mummies, *extracting the brain through the ears.*" The wit is original, but the subject is the same in the three passages; the whole turning on the allusion to the *head* and to the *ears*.

When Pope composed the following lines on Fame,

" How vain that second life in other's breath
The ESTATE which wits INHERIT after death;
Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign
(Unsure the *tenure*, but how vast the *fine!*)"
Temple of Fame.

He seems to have had present in his mind a single idea of Butler, by which he has very richly amplified the entire imagery. Butler says,

" Honour's a LEASE for LIVES TO COME
And cannot be extended from
The LEGAL TENANT."

Hud. part 1. c. 3. v. 1043.

The same thought may be found in Sir George Mackenzie's " Essay on preferring Solitude to public Employment," first published in 1665. Hudibras preceded it by two years. The thought is strongly expressed by the eloquent Mackenzie. He writes, " *Fame is a revenue payable only to our ghosts;* and to deny ourselves all present satisfaction, or to expose ourselves to so much hazard for this, were as great madness as to starve ourselves, or fight desperately for food, to be laid on our tombs after our death."

Dryden, in his " Absalom and Achitophel," says of the Earl of Shaftesbury,

" David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And Heaven had wanted one immortal song."

This verse was ringing in the ear of Pope, when with equal modesty and felicity he adopted it, in addressing his friend Dr. Arbuthnot,

" Friend of my life! which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song!"

Howell has prefixed to his letters a tedious poem, written in the taste of the times, and he there says of *letters*, that they are

" The heralds and sweet harbingers that move
From *East to West, on embassies of love,*
They can the *tropic cut,* and *cross the line.*"

It is probable that Pope had noted this thought, for the following lines seem a beautiful heightening of the idea:

" Heaven first taught *letters,* for some wretch's aid,
Some banished *lover,* or some captive maid."

Then, he adds, they

" *Speed the soft intercourse* from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from *Indus* to the *Pole.*"

Eloisa.

There is another passage in " Howell's Letters," which has a great affinity with a thought of Pope, who in " The Rape of the Lock," says,

" Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And *beauty draws us with a single hair.*"

Howell writes, p. 290, " 'Tis a powerful sex: —they were too strong for the first, the strongest and wisest man that was; they must needs be strong, when *one hair of a woman can draw more than an hundred pair of oxen.*"

Pope's description of the death of the lamb, in his " Essay on Man," is finished with the nicest touches, and is one of the finest pictures our poetry exhibits. Even familiar as it is to

our ear, we never examine it but with undiminished admiration.

"The *lamb*, thy riot dooms to bleed to day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood."

After pausing on the last two fine verses, will not the reader smile that I should conjecture the image might originally have been discovered in the following humble verses in a poem once considered not as contemptible:

"A gentle *lamb* has rhetoric to plead,
And when she sees the butcher's knife decreed,
Her voice intreats him not to make her bleed."
Dr. KING'S "Mully of Mountown."

This natural and affecting image might certainly have been observed by Pope, without his having perceived it through the less polished lens of the telescope of Dr. King. It is, however, a *similarity*, though it may not be an *imitation*; and is given as an example of that art in composition, which can ornament the humblest conception, like the graceful vest thrown over naked and sordid beggary.

I consider the following lines as strictly copied by Thomas Warton:

——————" The daring artist
Explor'd the pangs that rend the royal breast,
Those wounds that lurk beneath the tissued vest."
T. WARTON, on Shakspeare.

Sir Philip Sidney, in his " Defence of Poesie," has the same image. He writes, " Tragedy openeth the greatest *wounds*, and sheweth forth the *ulcers* that are *covered with tissue.*"

The same appropriation of thought will attach to the following lines of Tickell:

" While the charm'd reader with thy thought complies,
And views thy *Rosamond* with *Henry's* eyes."
Tickell to Addison.

Evidently from the French Horace;

" En vain contre le cid, un ministre se ligue;
Tout Paris, pour *Chimene*, a les yeux de *Rodrigue.*"
Boileau.

Oldham, the satyrist, says in his satires upon the Jesuits, that had Cain been of this black fraternity, he had not been content with a quarter of mankind.

" Had he been Jesuit, *had he but put on*
Their savage cruelty, the rest had gone!
Satyr II.

Doubtless at that moment echoed in his poetical ear, the energetic and caustic epigram of Andrew Marvell, against Blood stealing the crown

dressed in a Parson's cassock, and sparing the life of the keeper:—

"With the Priest's vestment *had he but put on*
The Prelate's cruelty, the crown had gone!"

The following passages seem echoes to each other, and it seems a justice due to Oldham the satirist to acknowledge him as the parent of this antithesis:—

"On Butler, who can think without just rage,
The glory and the scandal of the age?"
Satire against Poetry.

It seems evidently borrowed by Pope when he applies the thought to Erasmus:—

"At length Erasmus, that great injured name,
The *glory of the priesthood* and the *shame!*"

Young remembered the antithesis when he said,

"Of some for *glory* such the boundless rage
That they're the blackest *scandal* of the age."

Voltaire, a great reader of Pope, seems to have borrowed part of the expression:—

"*Scandale* d'Eglise, et des rois le modelle."

De Caux, an old French poet, in one of his moral poems on an hour-glass, inserted in modern collections, has many ingenious thoughts.

That this poem was read and admired by Goldsmith, the following beautiful image seems to indicate. De Caux, comparing the world to his hour-glass, says beautifully,

> ——— " *C'est un verre qui luit*
> *Qu'un souffle peut detruire, et qu'un souffle a produit.*"

Goldsmith applies the thought very happily:

> " Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,
> *A breath can make them, as a breath has made.*"

I do not know whether we might not read, for modern copies are sometimes incorrect,

> " A breath *unmakes* them, as a breath has made."

Thomson, in his pastoral story of Palemon and Lavinia, appears to have copied a passage from Otway. Palemon thus addresses Lavinia:—

> " Oh, let me now into a richer soil
> *Transplant* thee safe, where vernal *suns* and showers
> Diffuse their warmest, largest influence;
> And of my *garden* be the guide and joy !"

Chamont employs the same image when speaking of Monimia he says,—

> " You took her up a *little tender flower*,
> ——— and with a careful loving hand
> *Transplanted* her into your own fair *garden*,
> Where the *sun* always shines."

The origin of the following imagery is undoubtedly Grecian; but it is still embellished and modified by our best poets:

——————— "While universal *Pan*
Knit with the *graces* and the *hours in dance*
Led on th' eternal spring."

Paradise Lost.

Thomson probably caught this train of imagery:

——————— "Sudden to heaven
Thence weary vision turns, where *leading soft*
The silent hours of love, with purest ray
Sweet *Venus* shines."

Summer, v. 1692.

Gray, in repeating this imagery, has borrowed a remarkable epithet from Milton:—

"Lo, where the *rosy-bosom'd hours*
Fair Venus' train appear!"

Ode to Spring.

"Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund *spring*:
The *graces* and the *rosy-bosomed hours*
Thither all their bounties bring." Comus, v. 984.

Collins, in his Ode to *Fear*, whom he associates with *Danger*, there grandly personified, was I think considerably indebted to the following stanza of Spenser:

"Next him was *Fear*, all arm'd from top to toe,
Yet thought himself not safe enough thereby:

But feared each sudden moving to and fro;
And *his own arms* when glittering he did spy,
Or *clashing heard,* he fast away did fly,
As ashes pale of hue and wingy-heeled;
And evermore on *Danger* fixed his eye,
'Gainst whom he always bent a brazen shield,
Which his right hand unarmed fearfully did wield."

Faery Queen, B. iii. c. 12. s. 12.

Warm from its perusal, he seems to have seized it as a hint to the Ode to Fear, and in his "Passions" to have very finely copied an idea here:—

"First *Fear,* his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And *back recoiled,* he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made."

Ode to the Passions.

The stanza in Beattie's "Minstrel," first book, in which his "visionary boy," after "the storm of summer rain," views "the rainbow brighten to the setting sun," and runs to reach it:—

"Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chace thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purpos'd race be run;
Thus it fares with age," &c.

The same train of thought, and imagery applied to the same subject, though the image itself be somewhat different, may be found in the poems of the platonic John Norris; a writer

who has great originality of thought, and a highly poetical spirit. His stanza runs thus,

" So to the unthinking boy the distant sky
Seems on some mountain's surface to relie;
He with ambitious haste climbs the ascent,
Curious to touch the firmament;
But when with an unwearied pace,
He is arrived at the long-wished for place,
With sighs the sad defeat he does deplore;
His heaven is still as distant as before!"

The Infidel, by John Norris.

In the modern tragedy of " The Castle Spectre," is this fine description of the ghost of Evelina:—" Suddenly a female form glided along the vault. I flew towards her. My arms were already *unclosed to clasp her,—when suddenly her figure changed!* Her face grew pale, a stream of blood gushed from her bosom. While speaking, her form withered away; *the flesh fell from her bones;* a skeleton loathsome and meagre clasped me in her *mouldering arms.* Her infected breath was mingled with mine; her *rotting fingers* pressed my hand, and my face was covered with her kisses. Oh! then how I trembled with disgust!"

There is undoubtedly singular merit in this description. I shall contrast it with one which the French Virgil has written in an age, whose faith was stronger in ghosts than our's, yet

which perhaps had less skill in describing them. There are some circumstances which seem to indicate that the author of the "Castle Spectre" lighted his torch at the altar of the French muse. Athalia thus narrates her dream, in which the spectre of Jezabel her mother appears.

C'etoit pendant l'horreur d'une profonde nuit,
Ma mere Jezabel devant moi s'est montrée,
Comme au jour de sa mort pompeusement parée.—
——En achevant les mots epouvantables,
Son ombre vers mon lit a paru se baisser,
Et moi, je lui tendois les mains pour l'embrasser,
Mais *je n'ai plus trouvé qu'un horrible melange*
D'os, et de chair meurtris, et trainée dans la fange,
Des lambeaux pleins de sang et des membres affreux."

Racine's Athalie, Act ii. S. 5.

Goldsmith, when in his pedestrian tour, he sat amid the Alps, as he paints himself in his "Traveller," and felt himself the solitary neglected genius he was, desolate amidst the surrounding scenery; probably at that moment, the following beautiful image of Thomson he applied to himself:

"As in the hollow breast of Apennine
Beneath the centre of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises, far from human eyes,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild."

Autumn, v. 202.

Goldsmith very pathetically applies a similar image:—

"E'en now where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend,
Like yon *neglected shrub* at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast."
Traveller.

Akenside illustrates the native impulse of genius by a simile of Memnon's marble statue, sounding its lyre at the touch of the sun:—

"For as old Memnon's image, long renowned
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, sounded through the warbling air
Unbidden strains; even so did nature's hand, &c."

Is is remarkable that the same image, which does not appear obvious enough to have been the common inheritance of poets, is precisely used by old Regnier, the first French satirist, in the dedication of his satires to the French King. Louis XIV. supplies the place of nature to the courtly satirist. These are his words:— "On lit qu'en Ethiopie il y avoit une statue qui rendoit un son harmonieux, toutes les fois que le soleil levant la regardoit. Ce meme miracle, Sire, avez vous fait en moy qui touché de l'astre de Votre Majesté ay reçu la voix et la parole."

In that sublime passage in "Pope's Essay on Man," Epist. I. v. 237, beginning

"Vast chain of Being! which from God began,"

and proceeds to

"From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike."

Pope seems to have caught the idea and image from Waller, whose last verse is as fine as any in the "Essay on Man":—

"The chain that's fixed to the throne of Jove,
On which the fabric of our world depends,
One link dissolv'd, the whole creation ends."
Of the Danger his Majesty escaped, &c. v. 168.

It has been observed by Thyer, that Milton borrowed the expression *Imbrowned*, and *Brown*, which he applies to the evening shade, from the Italian. See Thyer's elegant note in B. IV. v. 246:—

——"And where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noon-tide bowers."

And B. IX. v. 1086,

——"Where highest woods impenetrable
To sun or star-light, spread their umbrage broad
And *brown as evening*.

Fa l'imbruno is an expression used by the Italians to denote the approach of the evening.

Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso, have made a very picturesque use of this term, noticed by Thyer. I doubt if it be applicable to our colder climate; but Thomson appears to have been struck by the fine effect it produces in poetical landscape; for he has

——" With quickened step
Brown night retires."

Summer, v. 51.

If the epithet be true, it cannot be more appropriately applied than in the season he describes, which most resembles the genial clime with the deep serenity of an Italian heaven. Milton in Italy had experienced the *brown evening*, but it may be suspected that Thomson only recollected the language of the poet.

The same observation may be made on two other poetical epithets. I shall notice the epithet "LAUGHING," applied to inanimate objects; and "PURPLE" to beautiful objects.

The natives of Italy and the softer climates, receive emotions from the view of their WATERS in the SPRING not equally experienced in the British roughness of our skies. The fluency and softness of the water are thus described by Lucretius:

——" Tibi suaveis Dædala tellus
Submittit flores; *tibi* RIDENT *æquora ponti.*"

Inelegantly rendered by Creech,

"The roughest sea puts on smooth looks, and SMILES."

Dryden more happily,—

"The ocean SMILES, and smooths her wavy breast."

But Metastasio has copied Lucretius:—

"A te fioriscono
Gli erbosi prati:
E i flutti RIDONO
Nel mar placati."

It merits observation, that the *Northern Poets* could not exalt their imagination higher than that the water SMILED, while the modern Italian, having before his eyes *a different spring*, found no difficulty in agreeing with the ancients, that the waves LAUGHED. Of late modern poetry has made a very free use of the animating epithet LAUGHING. Gray has the LAUGHING FLOWERS; and Langhorne in two beautiful lines, exquisitely personifies Flora;—

"Where Tweed's soft banks in liberal beauty lie,
And Flora LAUGHS beneath an azure sky."

Sir William Jones, with all the spirit of Oriental poetry, has "the LAUGHING AIR." It is but justice, however, to Dryden, to acknowledge that he has employed this epithet very boldly in the

following delightful lines, which are almost entirely borrowed from his original, Chaucer:—

"The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose, with beams so bright,
That all THE HORIZON LAUGHED to see the joyous sight."
Palamon and Arcite, B. ii.

It is extremely difficult to conceive what the ancients precisely meant by the word *purpureus*. They seem to have designed by it any thing BRIGHT and BEAUTIFUL. A classical friend has furnished me with numerous significations of this word which are very contradictory. Albinovanus, in his elegy on Livia, mentions *Nivem purpureum*. Catullus, *Quercus ramos purpureos*. Horace *purpureo bibet nectar*, and somewhere mentions *Olores purpureos*. Virgil has *purpuream vomit ille animam*; and Homer calls the sea *purple*, and gives it in some other book the same epithet, when in a storm.

The general idea, however, has been fondly adopted by the finest writers in Europe. The PURPLE of the ancients is not known to us. What idea, therefore, have the moderns affixed to it? Addison in his vision of the Temple of Fame describes the country as "being covered with a kind of PURPLE LIGHT." Gray's beautiful line is well known:—

"The bloom of young desire and *purple light* of love:"

and Tasso, in describing his hero Godfrey, says Heaven,—

"Gli empie d'onor la faccia, e vi riduce
Di Giovinezza, *il bel purpureo lume.*

Both Gray and Tasso copied Virgil, where Venus gives to her son Æneas—

———"*Lumenque* Juventæ
Purpureum."

Dryden has omitted the *purple light* in his version, nor is it given by Pitt; but Dryden expresses the general idea by

———"With hands divine,
Had formed his curling locks and *made his temples shine,*
And given his rolling eyes a *sparkling grace.*"

It is probable that Milton has given us his idea of what was meant by this *purple light,* when applied to the human countenance, in the felicitous expression of

"CELESTIAL ROSY-RED."

Gray appears to me to be indebted to Milton for a hint for the opening of his elegy: as in the first line he has Dante and Milton in his mind, he perhaps might also in the following passage

have recollected a congenial one in Comus, which he altered. Milton, describing the evening, marks it out by

> ——"What time the *laboured ox*
> In his loose traces from the furrow came,
> And the *swinkt hedger* at his supper sat."

Gray has,

> "The *lowing herd* wind slowly o'er the lea,
> The *plowman* homeward plods his weary way."

Warton has made an observation on this passage in Comus; and observes further that it is a *classical* circumstance, but not a *natural* one, in an *English landscape*, for our ploughmen quit their work at noon. I think therefore the imitation is still more evident; and as Warton observes, both Gray and Milton copied here from books, and not from life.

There are three great poets who have given us a similar incident.

Dryden introduces the highly finished picture of the *hare* in his Annus Mirabilis:—

Stanza 131.

> "So have I seen some *fearful hare* maintain
> A course, till tired before the dog she lay;
> Who stretched behind her, pants upon the plain,
> Past power to kill, as she to get away.

132.

With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey,
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies;
She trembling creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with *beseeching eyes.*"

Thomson paints the *stag* in a similar situation:—

——"Fainting breathless toil
Sick seizes on his heart—he stands at bay:
The *big round tears* run down his *dappled* face,
He *groans* in anguish."

Autumn, v. 451.

Shakspeare exhibits the same object:—

"The wretched animal heaved forth such *groans,*
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting; and the *big round tears*
Coursed one another down his *innocent nose*
In piteous chase.——

Of these three pictures the *beseeching eyes* of Dryden perhaps is more pathetic than *the big round tears,* certainly borrowed by Thomson from Shakspeare, because the former expression has more passion, and is therefore more poetical. The sixth line in Dryden is perhaps exquisite for its imitative harmony, and with peculiar felicity paints the action itself. Thomson adroitly drops *the innocent nose,* of which one word seems to have lost its original signification; and the other offends now

by its familiarity.—*The dappled face* is a term more picturesque, more appropriate, and more poetically expressed.

EXPLANATION OF THE FAC SIMILE.

The manuscripts of Pope's version of the Iliad and Odyssey are preserved in the British Museum in three volumes, the gift of David Mallet. They are written chiefly on the backs of letters, amongst which are several from Addison, Steele, Jervaise, Rowe, Young, Caryl, Walsh, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Fenton, Craggs, Congreve, Hughes, his mother Editha, and Lintot and Tonson the booksellers.

From these letters no informationcan be gathered, which merits public communication; they relate generally to the common civilities and common affairs of life. What little could be done, has already been given in the additions to Pope's works.

It has been observed, that Pope taught himself to write by copying printed books; of this singularity we have in this collection a remarkable instance; several parts are written in Roman and Italic characters, and which for some time I mistook for print; no imitation can be more correct.

What appears on this Fac Simile I have printed, to assist its decyphering; and I have

also subjoined the passage as it was given to the public for immediate reference. The manuscript from whence this page is taken consists of the first rude sketches; an intermediate copy having been employed for the press; so that the corrected verses of this Fac Simile occasionally vary from those published.

This passage has been selected, because the parting of Hector and Andromache is perhaps the most pleasing episode in the Iliad, while it is confessedly one of the most finished passages.

The lover of poetry will not be a little gratified, when he contemplates the variety of epithets, the imperfect idea, the gradual embellishment, and the critical rasures which are discoverable in this Fac Simile*. The action of Hector, in lifting his infant in his arms, occasioned Pope much trouble; and at length the printed copy has a different reading.

I must not omit noticing, that the whole is on the back of a letter franked by Addison; which cover I have given at one corner of the plate.

* Dr. Johnson, in noticing the mss. of Milton, preserved at Cambridge, has made, with his usual force of language, the following observation: "Such relicques shew how exeellence is acquired; what we hope ever to do with ease, we may learn first to do with diligence."

The parts distinguished by Italics were rejected.

Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
Extends his eager arms to embrace his boy,
lovely
Stretched his fond arms to seize the *beauteous* boy;
babe
The *boy* clung crying to his nurse's breast,
Scar'd at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
each *kind*
With silent pleasure *the* fond parent smil'd,
And Hector hasten'd to relieve his child.
The glittering terrors unbound,
His radiant helmet from his brows *unbrac'd,*
on the ground he
And on the ground the glittering terror plac'd,
beamy
And plac'd the *radiant* helmet on the ground,
Then seiz'd the boy and raising him in air,
lifting
Then *fondling* in his arms his infant heir,
dancing
Thus to the gods addrest a father's prayer.
glory fills
O thou, whose *thunder shakes* th' ethereal throne,
deathless
And all ye other *powers,* protect my son!
Like mine, this war, blooming youth with every virtue bless,
grace.
The shield and glory of the Trojan race;
Like mine his valour, and his just renown,
Like mine his labours to defend the crown.
Grant him, like me, to purchase just renown,
the Trojans
To guard *my country,* to defend the crown:

In arms like me, his country's war to wage,
And rise the Hector of the future age!
Against his country's foes the war to wage,
And rise the Hector of the future age!
successful
So when triumphant from the *glorious* toils
Of hero's slain, he bears the reeking spoils,
Whole hosts may
All Troy shall hail him, with deserv'd acclaim,
own the son
And *cry, this chief* transcends his father's fame.
While pleas'd, amidst the general shouts of Troy,
His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy.
fondly on her
He said, and gazing *o'er his consort's charms,*
Restor'd his infant to her longing arms.
on
Soft *in* her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
Prest to her heart, and with a smile survey'd;
to repose
Hush'd *him to rest,* and with a smile survey'd.
passion
But soon the troubled pleasure *mixt with rising fears,*
dash'd with fear,
The tender pleasure soon, chastised by fear,
She mingled with the smile a tender tear.

The passage appears thus in the printed work. I have marked in Italics the *variations.*

Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
Stretch'd his fond arms to *clasp* the lovely boy.
The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
Scar'd at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
With *secret** pleasure each fond parent smil'd,
And Hector hasted to relieve his child,

* *Silent* in the MS. (observes a critical friend) is greatly superior to *secret*, as it appears in the printed work.

The glittering terrors from his brows unbound,
And placed the *beaming* helmet on the ground;
Then kiss'd the child, and lifting high in air,
Thus to the gods *preferr'd* a father's prayer:

O thou, whose glory fills th' ethereal throne,
And all ye deathless powers, protect my son!
Grant him like me to purchase just renown,
To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown;
Against his country's foes the war to wage,
And rise the Hector of the future age!
So when, triumphant from successful toils
Of heroes slain, he bears the reeking spoils,
Whole hosts may hail him, with deserv'd acclaim,
And *say, this chief* transcends his father's fame:
While pleas'd amidst the general shouts of Troy,
His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy.

He *spoke;* and fondly gazing on her charms,
Restor'd *the pleasing burden to her arms*:
Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
Hush'd to repose, and with a smile survey'd.
The *troubled pleasure* soon chastis'd by fear,
She mingled with the smile a tender tear.

LITERARY FASHIONS.

There is such a thing as Literary Fashion, and prose and verse have been regulated by the same caprice that cuts our coats, and cocks our hats. Dr. Kippis, whose taste for literary history was more lively than any of our biographers, has observed that "Dodsley's Œconomy of Human Life" long received the most extravagant ap-

plause, from the supposition that it was written by a celebrated Nobleman; an instance of the power of *Literary Fashion;* the history of which, as it hath appeared in various ages and countries, and as it hath operated with respect to the different objects of science, learning, art, and taste, would form a work that might be highly instructive and entertaining."

The favourable reception of Dodsley's "Œconomy of Human Life," produced a whole family of œconomies; it was soon followed by a *second part*, the gratuitous ingenuity of one of those officious imitators, whom an original author never cares to thank. Other œconomies trod on the heels of each other.

For some memoranda towards a history of literary fashions, the following may be arranged:

At the restoration of letters in Europe, commentators and compilers were at the head of the literati; translators followed, who enriched themselves with their spoils on the commentators. When in the progress of modern literature, writers aimed to rival the great authors of Antiquity, the different styles, in their servile imitations, clashed together; and parties were formed, who fought desperately for the style they chose to adopt. The public were long harassed by a fantastic race, who called themselves Ciceronian, of whom are recorded many

ridiculous practices, to strain out the words of Cicero into their hollow verbosities. They were routed by the facetious Erasmus. Then followed the brilliant æra of epigrammatic points; and good sense, and good taste, were nothing without the spurious ornaments of false wit. Another age was deluged by a million of sonnets; and volumes were for a long time read, without their readers being aware that their patience was exhausted. There was an age of Epics, which probably can never return again; for after two or three, the rest can be but repetitions; even the genius of Mr. Southey will hardly revive this last taste.

In Italy, says Baretti, from 1530 to 1580, a vast multitude of books were written on love; the fashion of writing on that subject, (for certainly it was not always a passion with the indefatigable writer) was an epidemical distemper. They wrote like Pedants, and Pagans; those who could not write their love in verse, diffused themselves in prose. When the Poliphilus of Colonna appeared, which is given in the form of a dream, this dream made a great many dream, as it happens in company (says the sarcastic Zeno) when one yawner makes many yawn. When Bishop Hall first published his Satires, he called them "Toothless Satires," but his latter ones he distinguished as "Biting Sa

tires; many good-natured men, who could only write good-natured verse, crowded in his footsteps, and the abundance of their labours only shewed that even the "toothless" Satires of Hall could bite more sharply than those of servile imitators. After Spenser's "Faery Queen" was published, the press overflowed with many mistaken imitations, in which Fairies were the chief actors,—this circumstance is humorously animadverted on by Marston, in his Satires, as quoted by Warton: Every scribe now, falls asleep, and in his

> —— dreams, straight tenne pound to one
> Outsteps some *Fairy*——
> Awakes, straiet rubs his eyes, and prints his tale.

The great personage who gave a fashion to this class of literature, was the courtly and romantic Elizabeth herself; her obsequious wits and courtiers would not fail to feed and flatter her taste. Whether they all felt the beauties, or languished over the tediousness of "the Faerie Queen," and the "Arcadia" of Sidney, at least her majesty gave a vogue to such sentimental and refined romance. The classical Elizabeth introduced another literary fashion; having translated the Hercules Œtacus, she made it fashionable to translate Greek tragedies. There was a time, in the age of fanaticism, and

the long parliament, that books were considered the more valuable for their length. The seventeenth century was the age of folios. One Caryl wrote a "Commentary on Job" in two volumes folio, of above one thousand two hundred sheets! as it was intended to inculcate the virtue of patience, this volume gave at once the theory and the practice. One is astonished at the multitude of the divines of this age; whose works now lie buried under the brick and mortar tombs of four or five folios, which, on a moderate calculation, might now be "wire woven" into thirty or forty modern octavos.

In Charles I.'s time, love and honour were heightened by the wits into florid romance; but Lord Goring turned all into ridicule; and he was followed by the Duke of Buckingham, whose happy vein of ridicule was favoured by Charles II. who gave it the vogue it obtained.

Sir William Temple justly observes, that changes in veins of wit, are like those of habits, or other modes. On the return of Charles II. none were more out of fashion among the new courtiers, than the old earl of Norwich, who was esteemed the greatest wit, in his father's time, among the old.

Modern times have abounded with what may be called fashionable literature. Tragedies were some years ago as fashionable as comedies are

at this day; Thomson, Mallet, Francis, Hill, applied their genius to a department in which they lost it all. Declamation and rant, and over-refined language, were performed to the fable, the manners, and nature, and these sleep on our shelves. Then we had a family of paupers in the parish of poetry, in "Imitations of Spenser." Not many years ago, Churchill was the occasion of deluging the town with political poems in quarto,—these were succeeded by narrative poems, in the ballad measure, from all sizes of poets.—The Castle of Otranto was the father of that marvellous, which overstocks the circulating library.—Travels and voyages have long been a class of literature so fashionable, that we begin to complain.

Different times, then, are regulated by different tastes. What makes a strong impression on the public at one time, ceases to interest it at another; an author who sacrifices to the prevailing humours of his day has but little chance of being esteemed by posterity; and every age of modern literature might, perhaps, admit of a new classification, by dividing it into its periods of *fashionable literature*.

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